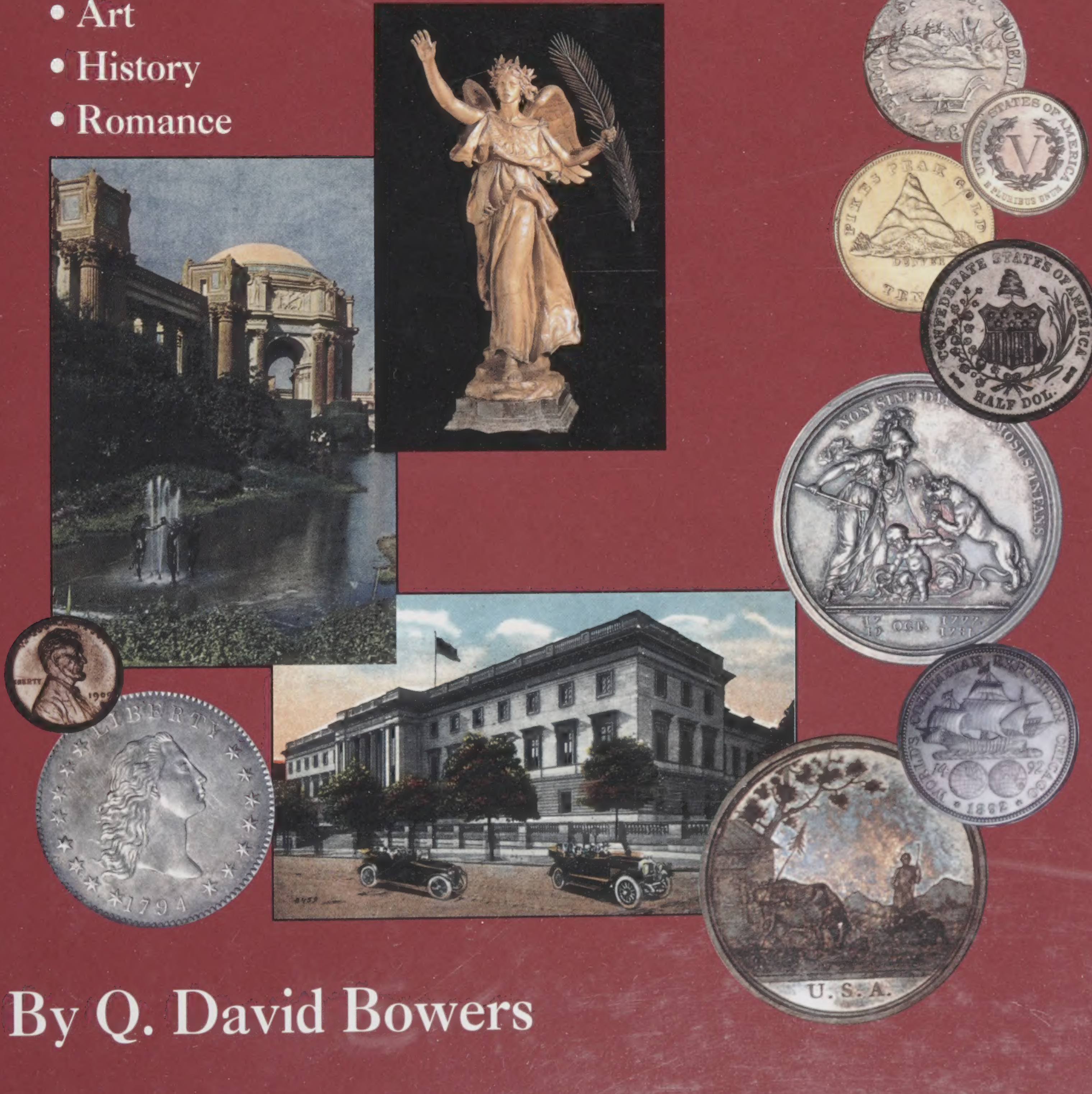
More Adventures With Rare Coins

Fifty Favorite Numismatic Stories

- Art
- History
- Romance



By Q. David Bowers

Q. David Bowers
P.O. Box 1224
Wolfeboro, NH 03894

December 5, 2002

Dear Dave:

A few days ago I had the opportunity to read your new 50 favorite numismatic stories and I could not put the book down. All I could skip were the auction listings and the die variety detail. You have created in a fascinating complex of drama, romance and completeness of the exciting episodes which numismatic objects unfold. You surround each topic with people, comment, images and historical events along with every relevant association and technicality. It is a stimulant which creates enjoyment and educational value now and into the future. It will help numismatics draw more people in the fold. Congratulations and thanks.

I do not have to tell you to keep writing as you cannot stop and be happy.

You asked me to help on the New Hampshire project and I enclose photocopies of our colonial New Hampshire collection except for sheets of reprints which you probably already have. I will send soon other photostats from my file of other people's images whether included in my book or not. I have Harley Freeman's ledger indicating the main collections and holdings of others of about 40 years ago.

If you need bank notes or scrip from New Hampshire we have a nice group. We have a 1776 New Hampshire cast copper piece and a similar 1777 NH fake. I hope you classify the WM piece as a forgery even though it gave rise to tons of copies.

Isn't numismatic research wonderful?

My best to your family and team.

Sincerely,

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APPRAISAL

W th best
wishes
Linda
Hal R

More Adventures With Rare Coins

Fifty Favorite Numismatic Stories

* * *

The Art, History, and Romance of Coinage

•

An American Repository and Museum

In book form
for your pleasure and edification

by

Q. David Bowers

* * *

Foreword by
Kenneth E. Bressett
Editor, *A Guide Book of U.S. Coins*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Q. David Bowers, president of Bowers and Merena Galleries (a division of Collectors Universe), has been in the rare coin business since he was a teenager in 1953. The author is a recipient of the Pennsylvania State University College of Business Administration's Alumni Achievement Award (1976); he has served as president of the American Numismatic Association (1983-1985) and president of the Professional Numismatists Guild (1977-1979); he is a recipient of the highest honor bestowed by the ANA (the Farran Zerbe Award); he was the first ANA member to be named Numismatist of the Year (1995); and he has been inducted into the Numismatic Hall of Fame (at ANA Headquarters in Colorado Springs).

Bowers is a recipient of the highest honor given by the Professional Numismatists Guild (The Founders' Award) and has received more "Book of the Year Award" and "Best Columnist" honors given by the Numismatic Literary Guild than has any other writer. In 2000 he was the first annual recipient of the Burnett Anderson Memorial Award, an honor jointly sponsored by the American Numismatic Society, the American Numismatic Association, and the Numismatic Literary Guild.

He is the author of over 40 books, hundreds of auction and other catalogues, and several thousand articles including columns in *Coin World* and *The Numismatist.*

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FOREWORD

by

Kenneth E. Bressett

The concept of this book began, as do so many of David's books, with a desire to pass on to others some of the interesting things that he has discovered in his lifelong study of numismatics. This time it is in the form of a series of stories or "adventures" telling the background and history of 50 of what the author feels are the most interesting coins or numismatic events he has encountered, a sequel to his popular 1979 book, *Adventures With Rare Coins.*

As I began reading this text I anticipated the treats that were to come and could hardly wait to see which coins had been singled out for discussion. Would they be the same 50 that I would have picked? If a contest were held what would a majority of collectors select? Surely we do not all think alike about such things, but there almost certainly must be many numismatic highlights that are universally held to be of such importance that they would appear on everyone's list.

With these thoughts in mind I let my imagination flow and pictured an opportunity to spend a relaxed weekend visiting with David Bowers and asking him to tell me about some of his favorite coins. It would be an opportunity to learn about coins from a man who has spent a lifetime researching and studying numismatics. My mind wandered and I began to formulate questions to ask as we chatted about old friends, experiences and best liked coins. I settled back and began to read with the same enthusiasm that would have been found in actually visiting with Dave at his home in New Hampshire on the shores of Lake Winnipesaukee.

Much to my delight the first item discussed was my personal favorite of all coins, the Massachusetts Pine Tree shilling dated 1652. This chapter would be for me a preview or sort of barometer telling what to expect of the other 49 items that are covered in this intriguing dissertation. It passed the test with flying colors and included not only the stories I expected to find but background and sidebar glimpses into our country's first coins not easily found elsewhere.

Now engrossed by Bowers' famous "can't-put-it-down" style of narrative, I went on to see what other tales were on his top 50 list. Would my other favorites be there? Would these stories captivate other readers as they did me? As expected the author does not let us down. The list includes not only the classics that one might guess would be there, but many others that would only by found by the intense background search that went into compiling this delightful story book.

Famous coins like the V.D.B. Lincoln cent, 1894-S dime, the "indecent" 1916 quarter, 1883 nickels that were passed off as $5 gold pieces, the fantastic 1804 dollars, cents of 1856 that were made for the Mint's friends, and of course the mysterious 1913 Liberty Head nickels are included in this coverage. The stories that Bowers weaves about these well-known standards are anything but commonplace; he has taken a fresh look at their background and supplies us with new insights into their place in numismatic history.

Other items in this "collection of 50 adventures" touch on some of the lesser-known, but just as exciting, pieces that have received little attention by other writers. The 1861 C.S.A. half dollar, obviously one of Bowers' favorite coins, is covered in surprising detail. He shows the same enthusiasm for the private coins that were made during Gold Rush days and gives us a clarifying view of their role as necessity money of that period. Stories of Rocky Mountain gold, the 1848 CAL. quarter-eagle, and $50 "slugs" are sure to please every reader.

The 1796 British Settlement in Kentucky token gives an insight into the author's appreciation of the aesthetic side of coinage. Of this issue Sylvester S. Crosby wrote: "In beauty of design and execution, the tokens are unsurpassed by any piece issued for American circulation." Read further to see how this token compares in beauty with the 1776 Libertas Americana medal, the 1794 silver dollar, Teddy Roosevelt's planned coin designs, the 1879 "Schoolgirl" silver dollar or a 1915 $50 commemorative coin.

An explanation of the meaning of "S.T. 1860.X" on encased postage stamps will be a revelation to many collectors, as it was to me. But that is only one of the hundreds of bits of trivia that come to light in David's tales. Do you know the background of how and why you can now afford the 1903-O Morgan dollar in your collection? Have you ever given much thought to the lowly 1943 steel cent in your type set? The coins and stories in this selection are not all about great rarities; they include a smattering of all kinds of items that might be found in any collection.

By the time you near the end of reading about Bowers' 50 favorite adventures you will probably feel the same hunger I experienced. Surely we can't stop here. There must be more. I was pleased to see a detailed account of the life of Dr. Louis Feuchtwanger, one of my numismatic heroes, but there was no mention of Abel Buell, the man I consider one of the most interesting numismatic characters. Could this mean there might be a sequel to this series? Let's all hope that our modern day Scheherazade will never run out of stories to tell for our entertainment.

Ken Bressett
Colorado Springs, Colorado

INTRODUCTION

In May 1892 in Saxony, the prominent publisher of *Zeitschrift für Instrumentenbau* (*Magazine for Musical Instrument Makers*) issued a slim volume describing *Pearls from the Collection of Paul de Wit in Leipzig.* Featured were instruments—some ancient, others modern—that he considered to be significant in the development of such items, along with examples that he found to be particularly interesting.[1] In the English part of the preface (the main text was in German, with parallel translations for French and English readers), de Wit noted the following. For purposes of the present numismatic book, you can effectively substitute "rare coins" for de Wit's "antiquated instruments" to make his remarks relevant to the volume you are now holding:

> The zeal for collecting, which during the past decades has been successfully extended to all provinces of art and science, is assuredly more than a mere pastime, and must not be undervalued, in particular, where it aids in widening our knowledge in one direction or another, and throws light upon facts hitherto insufficiently illuminated.
>
> This consideration formed the starting point of the endeavors which I have for years been making to collect antiquated instruments, and the same consideration guided the selection of material for this album....

Over the years many other collectors, historians, curators, aficionados, and observers of the scenes of life have compiled listings of "favorites," ranging from walks in the Maine woods to items recommended for those who wish to enjoy the art of Rembrandt or Alphonse Mucha.

In America in the twentieth century, the American Piano Company, maker of the Ampico reproducing piano, which re-enacted the hand playing of human artists, produced a series of "Fifty Favorites," a guide to melodies, from popular to classical, that were suggested for a library of piano rolls used on the Ampico. In this instance, such rolls were being made currently, and it was no problem for an Ampico owner to acquire one of each on the list. Not long afterward, Harry T. Peters, leading historian in the field of American lithographic prints, issued a list of the "Favorite Fifty" Currier & Ives subjects. As these were all collectors' items, some were common, others were rare, and some were inexpensive, while others were costly.

In the course of buying, selling, and studying rare coins, tokens, medals, and paper money for most of my life, I have encountered many different specimens which I consider to be particularly interesting—because of their history, or rarity, or place in the panorama of numismatics, or for some other aspect. The stories of some of them are gathered here, a modern-day equivalent of de Wit's *Pearls*, but under the title of *More Adventures With Rare Coins.* Some of my numismatic adventures involve single coins, while others concern little groups or categories.

Regarding the *adventures* part of the title, for me my life in numismatics has been one great adventure, one great journey of meeting interesting people, studying the traditions of the numismatic hobby, investigating the fascinating history of the coins themselves, and sharing this information through writing.

In *More Adventures With Rare Coins* my listing of 50 subjects could be expanded considerably. They are not represented as the "best" numismatic items, or the most expensive, or the rarest. Indeed, some are quite common, although rarities abound. However, each has a *story* that to me is fascinating. This book, which could just as easily be called *Twice-Told Tales in Numismatics* or *Fireside Chats About Rare Coins* (as it is, following the old-time tradition I have added a few subtitles on the title page, so I will leave this one out!), is drawn from many catalogues and other things I have written over the years, plus a generous measure of new material. I hope that if you are among the tens of thousands of people who have enjoyed my 1979 *Adventures With Rare Coins Book*, you'll enjoy this book as well. It is completely different.

Often in numismatics, one inquiry leads to another—and the most interesting route can be the most circuitous. This book is the equivalent of taking country roads rather than interstate highways, perhaps echoing the sentiment, "Getting there is half the fun." Thus there are many digressions—which, as you please, can either be read or skipped over. After all, a page or two later there will be an entirely different subject. Each "adventure" stands alone.

By the time I reached Adventure No. 50 I had come to realize how many more adventures could have been included—including some of my favorites from the wide world of American currency and fiscal documents, such as "wildcat" banks of the 1830s, Spencer M. Clark's little caper of putting his portrait on a Fractional Currency note, and the wonderful "Educational" notes of 1896. Then, of course, there is a vast panorama of ancient and foreign coins of compelling interest. To these could be added many outtakes from the regular American coin and medal series, such as Christian Gobrecht and his "signed" silver dollar of 1836. All of this indicates that, perhaps, another book may be in the offing if this one meets with a pleasant reception!

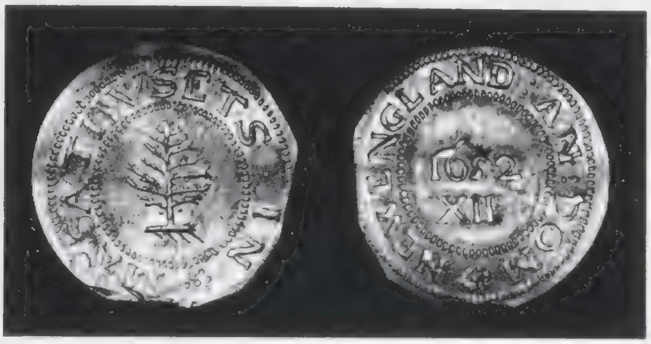
Here they are, in no particular order, except for Adventure No. 1, which at one time was considered to be an American numismatic icon, as the text relates.

More Adventures With Rare Coins

Fifty Favorite Numismatic Stories

ADVENTURE NO. 1

THE PINE TREE SHILLING DATED 1652



The Pine Tree shilling dated 1652, variety Noe-1 (after the listing of die varieties compiled by Sydney P. Noe, of the American Numismatic Society), may be the paradigm of American colonial coins, representing as it does one of the most familiar images of the early silver coinage of Massachusetts. (Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr. Collection, 1996, Lot 7)

* * *

A Numismatic Centerpiece

This adventure involves one of my all-time favorite coin varieties, a specimen of which is fascinating to contemplate in any grade—from well worn, as usually found, to challenging Mint State.

In *The Numismatist*, November 1909, Howland Wood gave the following advice under the title of "Numismatic Maxims for Beginners." Just one coin variety was specifically mentioned: His advice, by the way, is still relevant today:

> Don't set your heart on acquiring any coin right off. If you force the market you generally have to pay more than it is worth.
>
> If you are a young man you can afford to wait; it is only the old men who cannot.
>
> Don't plunge in too quickly at the start and think you must buy every coin offered.
>
> Don't try to collect everything; you'll never catch up with your contract. Also you will not enjoy what you have.
>
> You've got to learn by experience; a few jolts and knocks will impress you more than all of the advice an older collector can give you.
>
> Don't take any man's word that a coin is unique. There are far fewer unique coins than there are said to be.
>
> Collect, if possible, coins in the best condition; you then buy but once, and when you want to sell, you have something worth selling. A poor coin is an aggravation and an eyesore, and you as a rule can get very little for it when you want to sell.
>
> A library goes hand in hand with the collection of coins.
>
> It is better to collect a few series and know your subject than to attempt to collect everything and think you know it all but really know nothing.
>
> Every collector should have a Pine Tree shilling, as that is the first question your guests ask if you have.
>
> Never cry down another collector's coin; give them, at least, the benefit of the doubt.
>
> Never talk scandal or say mean things about other collectors; if you have nothing good to say, say nothing.
>
> The last maxim is the most important one to remember, and it is the one most often transgressed.

It is no longer 1909, and today not many collectors would zero in on the Pine Tree shilling as the most desirable coin to view. However, the appeal of the Pine Tree shilling endures, and to the knowing ones, if not the beginners, it still stands high in esteem.[1]

While today the 1652-dated silver Pine Tree shillings of Massachusetts are scarce in relation to the demand for them and are apt to be encountered just one at a time, and not all that often, this was not always the case. Shortly after the turn of the 20th century, Augustus G. Heaton visited W.S. Lincoln & Son, rare coin dealers in England, later informing readers of the July 1905 issue of *The Numismatist:*

> In London…Lincoln has a small store on a central, though less fashionable street, but it is entirely devoted to coins and curios, which he mainly attends to unaided, and collectors have every attention. I was shown an entire tray full of Pine Tree shillings and sixpences—a very choice array, and a number of drawers of U.S. coins of all denominations with, here and there, very tempting pieces.

Nearly a half century later, in 1956, Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr., who formed the only complete collection of United States coin denominations, dates, and mintmarks ever assembled, prepared a booklet, "An Exhibition of the World's Foremost Collection of United States Coins." Among the highlights illustrated was a very attractive example of the Pine Tree Shilling dated 1652, variety Noe-1(pictured at the beginning of this chapter). This commentary was included:[2]

> The first mint in the colonies was operated by John Hull without royal license. The General Court of Massachusetts Colony, in an order dated May 27, 1652, authorized the coinage of shillings, sixpence, and threepence, and fixed Hull's fee at one shilling out of every 20 coined. The mint was located in the rear of Hull's residence in Boston, and operations began in the same year.

Story of the Pine Tree Shilling

In the mid-seventeenth century in the Massachusetts Bay Colony monetary conditions were chaotic. There was an insufficiency of circulating coins, and the pieces that could be found were often lightweight or counterfeit. Spanish-American silver and gold coins were used in large transactions, especially in the seagoing trade, but these were not in abundant supply and all too often were of questionable weight and authenticity as well. Wampum, corn, grain, fish, musket balls, and other items also served as media of exchange, particularly for business within the colony.

In May 1652 the General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colony authorized John Hull and his friend Robert Sanderson (born *Saunderson* in England) to produce silver threepence (denominated III), sixpence (VI), and shillings (XII), such to be marked NE (for New England) on one side and with the denomination on the other. These were made on crude silver planchets, counterstamped twice, once with NE, after which the planchet was turned over, and at the opposite end, in order to avoid flattening the NE inscription, the III, VI, or XII was stamped. A "privy mark" or secret notation was to be applied to each coin, to be changed every three months and to be known only by the governor and by sworn employees of the mint. Such a mark was intended to be useful in determining whether a given coin was genuine if it was later questioned. It was first proposed that each coin be "flat and square," but it was subsequently decided to make them "in a round form."

The mint building to be erected on Hull's property in Boston was to be 16 feet square by 10 feet high. Hull and Sanderson were to receive as their compensation one shilling for every 20 coined, a contract which eventually yielded to Hull what was described as a *fortune*. Little has been written about Sanderson's activities, but, presumably, he benefited extensively as well. Dies were cut by Joseph Jenks (or Jencks) and probably others, Jenks having a manufactory at Saugus Iron Works near Boston (today a historic site open to the public). Silver sources were erratic, were never ample, and included coins and metal from the West Indies, some of the latter being in the form of silver captured by buccaneers from Spanish galleons.[3]

The production of the NE coinage (as it became known later in numismatic circles) was brief and apparently extended from about June 11, 1652 to about October 19, but bore no date. The simple design of the NE pieces invited clipping (the removal of silver slivers from the edge) and counterfeiting. On October 19, 1652, the General Court authorized a revision of

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[1] Howland Wood's numismatic accomplishments were many. In September 1907 he was elected corresponding secretary of the American Numismatic Association. In October 1908 he was elected chairman of the Board of Governors of the ANA. In 1910 his study, "Grading Standards," was included in the *ANA Year Book*. From 1910 to 1920 he served as editor of the *American Journal of Numismatics*. From January 25, 1913, to January 4, 1938, he served as curator of the collection of the American Numismatic Society. In 1969 he was among the honorees to be enshrined in this, the opening year of the ANA Hall of Fame. His name is further remembered with the Howland Wood Best in Show exhibit award given by the ANA.

[2] In the exhibition catalogue this text pertained to both the NE shilling and the Pine Tree shilling.

[3] Sylvester S. Crosby, *Early Coins of America*, 1875, p. 32, quoting Hutchinson, Hist. Mass. 3rd ed, vol. i, p. 164.

Water town 33
Chensford
Concord
34
Medfield
25
Dedham
Cambridg 39
Billerica
Woburn:
Roxbury
Crown
35
36
Bradford
Dorchester
Bosto
Branfry
Lyn
Salem
Weymouth
Hingam
Plimouth
Marblehead
Wenham
Scituat
Hull
CAnn

A curious map showing the Massachusetts Bay Colony circa 1667, when the Colony was just beginning to issue the silver Pine Tree shillings. Unlike most modern maps, in which the top of the map is north, on this map north is on the right-hand side. The shaded area represents the Atlantic Ocean.

Such towns as Plymouth, Hull, Dorchester, Roxbury, Boston (in small print and on a peninsula), Cambridge, and Marblehead are identified. The Massachusetts mint was located in Boston. (Copy of what "is believed to be a specimen of the first engraving executed in America," from Benson J. Lossing, ***Field-Guide to the Revolution,*** Vol. I.)

the motifs to incorporate a tree design on one side and the date 1652 and denomination on the other, each side to have border inscriptions as well.

The first tree-type coins depicted what seemed to be more like a bush or thicket, subsequently called the Willow Tree coinage by numismatists. The Willow Tree pieces were crudely struck from amateurishly prepared dies, leading Crosby to suggest that, "So rude, indeed are they, that it is difficult for us to believe them to have been accepted by any people except under urgent necessity for coin of some kind, however imperfect."[1] These were followed circa 1660-1667 by the so-called Oak Tree coinage which included a new denomination, the twopence, used only in the Oak Tree series, bearing the date 1662 (while other denominations continued the anachronistic 1652 date).

The Pine Tree coinage was made next, from 1667 to 1674 in the large-diameter format (this being the format of the illustrated Noe-1 variety from the Eliasberg Collection), and after that, until 1682, on thicker planchets of reduced diameter, the latter reducing die wear. Hull's contract to coin silver for the colony was renewed four times by the General Court, the last on May 12, 1675, for a period of seven years. In 1682 the franchise expired, and there was no consideration to renew it. Mintmaster Hull died the following year on October 1, 1683.

Numismatic tradition has it that for many years the Massachusetts silver coinage had been considered illegal by British authorities, probably giving rise to the continuance of the 1652 date (except for the 1662 Oak Tree twopence) to preserve the fiction that coinage had not occurred after that time. Relations with the British crown were not cordial, and in 1684 the colony's charter was revoked for what was considered to be many years of disobedience. Alternatively, the 1652 date simply represents the year of initial authorization of the various issues.

The Massachusetts coins circulated widely in the Eastern Seaboard colonies and in Canada. There were sufficient pieces in commerce in Maryland that on November 19, 1686, that colony legislated that silver sixpence and shillings from New England should pass as equivalent to British coins of the same denominations. Threepence pieces, never made in large quantities, did not become important in commerce.

Newspaper Accounts from 1776

The following press notices related to Massachusetts silver coins were published in London during the American Revolution. There are a number of diversions from the facts (such as stating the date of the coins is expressed as MDCLII instead of 1652), but the comments are quite interesting:[2]

The Middlesex Journal, London, January 11, 1776:

> In the year 1652, the Colony of the Massachusetts coined money, and several pieces of silver, about the size and value of a shilling, which are now to be seen handed about in London; on the one side is a Fir Tree in a Field of White (the Army of the Colony), and the word MASSACHUSETTS; and on the other side of which is NEW-ENGLAND, Anno Domini, MDCLII.

The Middlesex Journal, London, January 16, 1776.

> The Massachusetts Shilling lately mentioned in the public papers, is not the only money struck by our settlements abroad, nor the only coin minted in New England. Of this Shilling too (the inscription on which is MASATHUSETS, &c. 1652, and not MASACHUSETTS) there are two sorts, viz. A bigger

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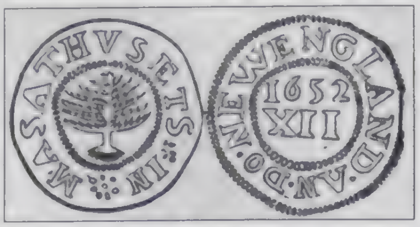
[1] Crosby, p. 46.

[2] Quoted by William Kelby, "Notes on Coins," ***Historical Magazine,*** February 1869.



Engraving of a Pine Tree shilling dated 1652 from Lossing, *Field-Book of the Revolution*, Vol. I, 1850. Lossing, who had an interest in things numismatic, relayed this bit of American folklore:

"This is a fac-simile of the first money coined in America. The mint-master, who was allowed to take 15 pence out of every 20 shillings, for his trouble in coining, made a large fortune by it. Henry Sewall, the founder of Newbury, in Massachusetts, married his only daughter, a plump girl of 18 years. When the wedding ceremony was ended, a large pair of scales was brought out and suspended. In one disk the blushing bride was placed, and 'pine tree shillings,' as the coin was called, were poured into the other until there was an equipoise.

"The money was then handed to Mr. Sewall as his wife's dowry, amounting to a handsome sum in those days. There are a few pieces of this money still in existence. One which I saw in the possession of a gentleman in New York was not as much worn as many of the Spanish quarters now in circulation among us. The silver appeared to be very pure."

The "quarters" reference is to Spanish silver two-real or *two bit* pieces, valued at 25 cents, which in 1850 were more plentiful in circulation than were federal Liberty Seated quarters. These Spanish coins were legal tender and remained so until the Act of February 21, 1857, was fully implemented.

> and a lesser (the latter of very indifferent workmanship) besides their several parts, such as the penny, two-pence, three-pence, and six-pence, all of the same type; and a third sort varying from these, having on it the story of the good Samaritan.
>
> The Shillings likewise have this further particular relative to them, viz. That Mr. John Hull, who obtained the patent for coining them, raised a very large estate, both real and personal, from it, insomuch that he was enabled to give his daughter thirty thousand pounds for her portion, all of which was paid, as report says, in these New England shillings.
>
> After this, it is unnecessary to observe, that they are common; but what first gave rise to their coinage, was the great quantities of silver taken about the year 1651, by the Buccaneers, from the Spaniards, which being brought to New England, it was thought prudent to coin it there for the prevention of frauds, and, therefore, a mint was erected at Boston.
>
> The first money being thus struck in the year 1652, the same Date was continued upon all that were struck for thirty years after. There were also other pieces struck in New England, which are very well known to the lovers of virtu. The Summer [*sic*] Islands, Maryland, Carolina, and the English settlements in the East Indies, likewise had their monies, and the last still enjoy that privilege. It is to be observed also, that when Massachusetts struck theirs, there was at that time no King in Israel, it being under the protectorate of Oliver Cromwell, who with his Parliament took notice of it; and having been thus indulged, there was a tacit allowance of it afterwards by Charles II for more than twenty years; and although it made one of the charges against the Colony, when their Charter was called in question, yet having been done for a good purpose, no great stress was laid upon it.
>
> The Massachusetts Shilling is intrinsically worth about ninepence or ten-pence English, and as a curiosity bears but a small premium.

Numismatic Aspects

The affairs of the Massachusetts Bay Colony are well documented in papers and accounts readily available to researchers, and the coinage was sufficiently extensive that dozens of die varieties have been identified, some common, others extremely rare.[1] As a result, the silver coinage has attracted the attention of several American students over the years, beginning in a significant way with Sylvester S. Crosby in the 1870s, continuing to Sydney P. Noe in the 1940s and early 1950s and others since that time.

The Pine Tree shilling in particular became the subject of several stories and folklore accounts, including a romantic tale penned by Nathaniel Hawthorne in which John Hull, the mintmaster, gave his daughter's weight in Pine Tree shillings as her dowry, this being repeated by Benson J. Lossing and many others. Another story has it that such pieces, if bent twice, would ward off witches, said to be prominent in Salem in the late seventeenth century.

By the early nineteenth century, long before numismatics became a widespread hobby in America, Pine Tree shillings and related issues were recognized as interesting items to collect and were sold for premiums in various auctions and offerings of antiquities. Many accounts were published of stray pieces being found here and there, as in this item in *Historical Magazine*, July 1867:

> An old "pine tree shilling" of Massachusetts coinage, of the very old and rare date, 1652, was picked up a day or two ago by Orrin Loomis, of West Springfield

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[1] Among many sources for information regarding the mintmaster, *John Hull*, by Hermann Frederick Clarke, A.B., 1940 (reprinted by A.W. Pollock & Co., 1993), is particularly interesting. Hull's personal diaries have been preserved by the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts, and were printed in its *Transactions*, Vol. III, 1857.

> [Massachusetts], an old man of 75, while walking in his own fields. The letters upon the coin, the figure of the old tree, date and all, have been distinctly preserved.

Crosby in *Early Coins of America,* 1875, reprints much valuable and interesting original legislation and commentary. Noe's three works on the series, published in 1943 (NE and Willow Tree coinage study), 1947 (Oak Tree coinage), and 1952 (Pine Tree coinage), form the source for "Noe numbers" used to attribute the coins today. Noe further gave much fascinating information about hoards of Massachusetts coins found over a long period of time.

Not much is known about the specific equipment used to strike the coins. It is believed that the earliest NE pieces were made by impressing the NE logotype punch on one part of the planchet, then turning the planchet over and hitting it with a denomination punch (*e.g.,* XII) in a spot not directly opposite the first stamp, so as not to obliterate it. Such a procedure seems evident from examination of the coins themselves. The Willow Tree pieces were probably made by using two opposing metal dies in some sort of a chuck or sleeve, but not tightly fastened—as many show doubled impressions and other evidence of the dies being loose, and slightly differently aligned when a second blow was given to help strengthen the impressions. The slightly undulating or "wavy" appearance of certain pieces such as large planchet shillings may indicate that some type of a rocker die was used. Certain theories regarding the coinages have been related in *The Colonial Newsletter* and elsewhere.

English View of American Coinage

In 1789 a new edition of John Pinkerton's work, *An Essay on Medals: or an Introduction to the Knowledge of Ancient and Modern Coins and Medals....* was published in two volumes in London. "This edition would have appeared last winter, had not fire, January 1788, consumed the printer's house and the impression; but fortunately a copy was saved," an introductory paragraph noted.

Pinkerton obviously loved numismatics, as revealed by the extensive space he devoted to the symbiotic relationship of coins and medals to written history. Samples from his work are given below, including *everything* he included about certain coins now (in the twenty-first century as the *present* words are being written) listed in the *Guide Book of United States Coins* and desired by American collectors. It will be seen that the extensive silver coinage of Massachusetts did not rate a mention, nor did the many other American series. On the other hand, these were "foreign" issues to the English reader for which the volumes were intended, and it is perhaps natural that only slight attention was paid to American coins. Pinkerton's *medals* referred to coins and medals. These are but a few sentences out of context from a much larger work:

> **The Pleasure of Medal Collecting**
>
> The amusement arising from medals is so common and universal that we meet with few people who have not formed a little collection of some kind or another. As no axiom is looked upon as more certain than that even the minutest principles of the human mind have been the same in all ages, we must be induced to suppose that the study of medals is almost as ancient as medals themselves....
>
> The principal and most common source of pleasure arising from the science of medals is their workmanship. The motives of delight which owe their origin to the other efforts of imitative art will here likewise of course predominate. A philosophic inquiry into the prime causes of our pleasures arising from art, though it would make an admirable subject for a treatise....
>
> Not to enter then into that profound subject, this we know, that the most barbarous nations are more pleased with the rudest efforts of art than with the most admirable works of nature; and that, in proportion to the powers of the mind that are large and various, such, likewise, are the pleasures which it receives from those superlative productions of art, which can only be the offspring of vast genius. It follows that the creation of art alike pleases the most uninformed and the most cultivated mind.
>
> The chief and most common amusement, therefore, which attends this study, originates from the strength and spirit, from the finish and beauty, which the engraver has displayed.
>
> But, beside this, there are many other sources of entertainment in the science of medals. Such is the personal acquaintance which, so to speak, it gives us with all the great men of former times. Nothing can be well more amusing than to read history, with contemporary coins before you. It brings the actions, in a manner, before our eyes; and we fit, as in a theatre, with the actors before us....
>
> **[Coins Related to the Americas]**
>
> A description of these pieces [certain siege pieces of Charles I, viewed by Pinkerton as being outside of the main thrust of his study] would be as endless as unnecessary, and it were likewise useless to dwell upon the Bombay money; upon Lord Baltimore's; or the other American coins, the best of which are the two penny, penny, half penny, and farthing of George I, marked with a rose, ROSA AMERICANA.[1]

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[1] [Original footnote in Pinkerton's text:] This was another scheme of Wood, who had the Irish patent. These coins are all of Bath metal, a mixture of brass and copper.

> ...In 1722 William Wood, Esq., acquired from George I the famous patent which excited much discontent in Ireland. This was for coining halfpence and farthings; and the loss to Ireland, from the small size allowed to these pieces by the patent itself, as estimated at £60,000, but Wood caused them to be struck of a far smaller form than the patent bore, so that his gain would have been near £100,000. Much exaggeration is however suspected in this estimate, for the fact is, that Swift, and other Jacobite writers, took this poor occasion to disturb government. These coins are of very fine copper and workmanship, and have the best portrait of George I perhaps to be anywhere found. Sir Isaac Newton, then at the head of the mint, said that they were superior to the English in everything but size....
>
> In 1760, however, there was a great scarcity of copper coin in Ireland; upon which a society of Irish gentlemen applied for leave, upon proper conditions, to coin halfpence; which being granted, those appeared with a very bad portrait of George II and VOCE POPULI around it. The bust bears a much greater resemblance to the pretender; but whether this was a piece of waggery in the engraver, or only arose from his ignorance in drawing, but be left in doubt. Some say that these pieces were issued without any leave being asked or obtained....[1]

John Pinkerton abided no pretensions, and took issue with some of the numismatic books of his day:

> Pedantry, in most sciences, is now held in just contempt, but it yet reigns in the medallic line in a supreme degree. Nor is this surprising, when it is considered that the pedants themselves are the givers of their own silly laws; for excepting perhaps half a dozen instances, books upon this subject have only been written by men lost in the pedantry of numismatic erudition.

In summation, Pinkerton stated that "to assist in the selection of a cabinet of medals no directions can be given, fancy being the only law...." In other words, collect what you enjoy. Well said!

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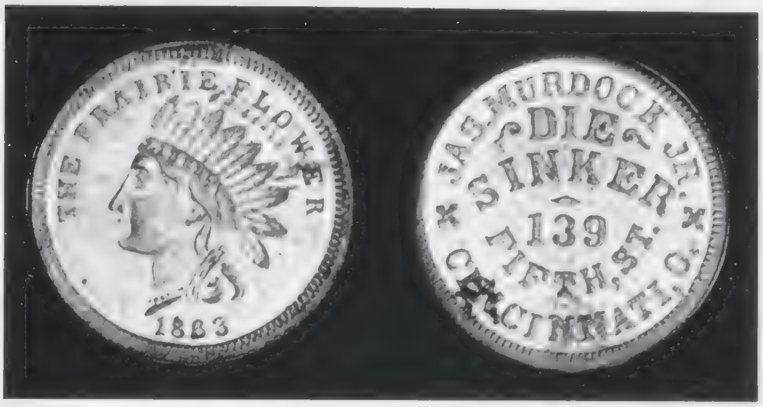
[1] In the present writer's (QDB's) view, Wood's copper coinage for Ireland and the later Voce Populi coinage have nothing whatever to do with America or American numismatics. However, long ago they were "adopted" into United States references, including the *Guide Book of U.S. Coins*, and now they are avidly collected on this side of the Atlantic.

ADVENTURE NO. 2

THE PRAIRIE FLOWER



The Prairie Flower motif, by John Stanton, Cincinnati diesinker, reflected a popular sentimental story and song of the era. This variety, known as Fuld OH-165-DY-04a, is struck in copper-nickel, and has a reeded edge. The advertising die publicized James Murdock, who worked in the shop of John Stanton, Cincinnati.

* * *

A Girl of the Wilderness

The sentimental scenario of a worldly man encountering an ingénue of the forest or plain, or even in lower echelons of city society, is a tried and true theme to tug on the heartstrings, one that has pervaded literature for centuries, down to the unforgettable character of Liza Doolittle in *My Fair Lady*, derived from George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*.

In the field of Civil War tokens, issued during the early 1860s, the combination of romance and nostalgia is evoked in a token depicting an Indian princess with the surrounding inscription, THE PRAIRIE FLOWER, 1863. Produced by John Stanton, well-known Cincinnati die sinker, engraver, and token manufacturer, these pieces once circulated extensively, bearing on one side an advertisement or trade notice and on the other side the Prairie Flower, an Indian maiden whose features were borrowed from the federal cent first struck for circulation in 1859, concerning which I give a few remarks below. Most probably, if I were to ever create a *Still More Adventures* book, Indian Head cents would figure in it!

The Federal Indian Head Cent 1859-1909

While *Prairie Flower* tokens are known to only a relatively few numismatists, the design from which her portrait was borrowed, the federal Indian Head cent, has played to a wide audience of enthusiasts ever since the first patterns were struck in 1858 and the first regular issues in 1859.[1] I have enjoyed Indian Head "pennies" for a long time, and, believe it or not, even a well worn common date has a special appeal to me. Such coins gave rise to the familiar *penny arcade* term, such popular galleries first arising in the United States in the 1890s.

Concerning the origin of the design, the Indian Head motif had its beginnings in 1858. At the time it was desired to replace the Flying Eagle cent, which had been in circulation for only two years.[1] In a letter dated August 21, 1858, to Mint Director James Ross Snowden, Chief Engraver James B. Longacre observed:[2]

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[1] Citations in this paragraph regarding the origin of the federal Indian Head cent are extracts from the writer's book, *A Buyer's and Enthusiast's Guide to Flying Eagle and Indian Head Cents*, 1996.

> I allude more especially to the design on the obverse.... Why should we in seeking a type for the illustration or symbol of a nation that need not hold itself lower than the Roman virtue or the science of Greece, prefer the barbaric period of a remote and distant people, from which to draw an emblem of nationality, to the aboriginal period of our own land?... Why not be American from the spring-head within our own domain?
>
> From the copper shores of Lake Superior to the silver mountains of Potosi, from the Ojibwa to the Araucanian, the feathered tiara is as characteristic of the primitiveness of our hemisphere, as the turban is of the Asiatic. Nor is there any thing in its decorative character, repulsive to the association of Liberty with the intelligent American.

On November 4, 1858, Snowden discussed Longacre's motif in a letter to Secretary of the Treasury Howell Cobb, noting in part:

> The obverse...presents an ideal head of America—the drooping plumes of the North American Indian give it the character of North America...and that so far from being modeled on any human features in the Longacre family, or any Indians, these were based squarely on the classical profiles on ancient sculpture....
>
> In any event, the feathered headdress was certainly intended in at least two instances to be that of the Indian, the artists at the Mint evidently not realizing the absurd incongruity of placing this most masculine attribute of the warrior brave on the head of a woman....

Earlier, in 1854, Longacre had used a "feathered tiara" on the new designs for the gold dollar and $3 gold piece. However, it was differently styled than the headdress, typically likened to a war bonnet, used on the 1858 and later Indian cents.

A legend that Longacre's daughter Sarah posed as the model has long endured, but in actuality the image is probably a composite. Longacre himself stated the facial profile was copied from a statue, *Venus Accroupii* (Venus Crouching), apparently either in a Philadelphia museum or in the Vatican in Italy.[3] The above-quoted letter from Snowden to Cobb seemingly addresses the "Sarah question" via the sentence denying the representation of "any human features in the Longacre family."

A photograph of Sarah Longacre (born on February 20, 1828, and thus hardly a little girl when either the 1854 $3 or the 1858 pattern Indian cents were made) taken on her wedding day in 1847 is inconclusive, but shows her face to be an equal or better candidate than the somewhat unlikely profile of the aforementioned Venus.[4] The attribution of the portrait will probably never be decided to everyone's satisfaction, especially absent any surviving information from Longacre stating that his daughter Sarah was the model.

With regard to the "absurd incongruity of placing this most masculine attribute of the warrior brave on the head of a woman," history repeated itself in 1907 when Augustus Saint-Gaudens decked Miss Liberty in a feathered headdress on the new $10 gold coin. However, ethnologically correct male Indians in headdresses were used elsewhere in the American monetary system, most notably on the $5 Silver Certificate paper currency in the Series of 1899, Bela Lyon Pratt's designs for the new gold $2.50 and $5 coins of 1908, and James Earle Fraser's Indian-"Buffalo" nickel of 1913.

The Prairie Flower Token Design

Virtually at the inception of John Stanton's Prairie Flower motif in the early 1860s its appealing features captured the imagination of numismatists, with the result that a number of delicacies were created. Stanton took many advertising dies on hand for the tokens of Cincinnati merchants and other tradesmen and made strikings combining those dies with the Prairie Flower obverse. At the time Cincinnati was a very active area for coin collecting, and Thomas Cleneay, for one, wrote that he used to visit Stanton's shop on a regular basis to see what was new and to acquire desirable specimens. James Murdock, Jr., and William W. Spencer were Stanton's partners in what seems to have been a highly successful enterprise.

The appeal of Stanton's tokens endured, with The Prairie Flower being among the more popular designs. In 1986, numismatist Jack R. Detwiler noted that John H. Blood, a St. Louis purveyor of patent medicine, ordered his tokens from the Cincinnati die-sinker firm of Stanton, Murdock, and Spencer. They designed the interesting stock die, Fuld 1069, whose inscription is "The Prairie Flower," main device is an Indian princess and date is 1863. Fuld 1069 was used as a reverse on store cards for over 50 merchants including John Blood. In my opinion the Indian princess [on other dies] is the Prairie Flower, and the three Cincinnati die sinkers took their inspiration from the colorful conversation of the Civil War Americans. Stanton, Murdock, and Spencer listened when their contemporary America talked.[1]

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[1] The story of the Flying Eagle cent is given as Adventure No. 35 in the present text.

[2] Information from Dr. George R. Conger, "The Controversial Feathered Headdress," *Longacre's Ledger*, April 1992; and Joy Goforth, "Who Came First? Goddess, Sarah, or Indian?" *Coin World*, January 4, 1984 (reprinted from Goforth's article in the November 1983 issue of *Mint Press*, there titled "Goddess of Liberty").

[3] Breen, *Encyclopedia*, p. 217, locates the statue "in a Philadelphia museum." Cornelius Vermeule, *Numismatic Art in America*, is the source for the Vatican location. Could there be two versions of the statue? Sarah Longacre biographical and portrait information is adapted from "An Argument Favoring Sarah as Longacre's Model," *Longacre's Ledger*, July 1992, which in turn was based upon several cited sources.

[4] Both images are presented in juxtaposition in *Longacre's Ledger*, July 1992, p. 19.

In the instance of The Prairie Flower, it seems that by the time the Civil War commenced in 1861, she was already well known as the personification of a free-spirited girl. In 1855 George F. Root's song of the same title was published, adding a first name to the Prairie Flower:

Rosalie, the Prairie Flower

Verse I:
On the distant prairie, where the heather wild,
In its quiet beauty liv'd and smiled,
Stands a little cottage, and a creeping vine
Loves around its porch to twine.
In that peaceful dwelling was a lovely child,
With her blue eyes beaming soft and mild,
And the wavy ringlets of her flaxen hair,
Floating in the summer air.

CHORUS:
Fair as a lily, joyous and free,
Light of that prairie home was she.
Ev'ry one who knew her felt the gentle pow'r
Of Rosalie, "The Prairie Flow'r."

Verse II:
On that distant prairie, when the days were long,
Tripping like a fairy, sweet her song,
With the sunny blossoms, and the birds at play,
Beautiful and bright as they.
When the twilight shadows gather'd in the west,
And the voice of Nature sank to rest,
Like a cherub kneeling, seem'd the lovely child,
With her gentle eyes so mild.

CHORUS:
Fair as a lily, joyous and free,
Light of that prairie home was she.
Ev'ry one who knew her felt the gentle pow'r
Of Rosalie, "The Prairie Flow'r."

Verse III:
But the summer faded, and a chilly blast,
O'er that happy cottage swept at last;
When the autumn song birds woke the dewy morn,
Little 'Prairie Flow'r' was gone.
For the angels whisper'd softly in her ear,
'Child, thy Father calls thee, stay not here.'
And they gently bore her, rob'd in spotless white,
To their blissful home of light.

CHORUS:
Though we shall never look on her more,
Gone with the love and joy she bore,
Far away she's blooming in a fadeless bow'r,
Sweet Rosalie, "The Prairie Flow'r'.

Here we have fair and beautiful Rosalie living "on the distant prairie," but in bittersweet conclusion, carried off to heaven, this being the *deus ex machina*, sort of, ending to so many nineteenth-century songs and stories. Sung to a lilting melody, *Rosalie, the Prairie Flower* became very popular and was included in the repertoire of the Christy Minstrels and other groups.

The Composer

Rosalie, the Prairie Flower, was composed by George Frederick Root, born in Sheffield, Massachusetts, on August 20, 1820. He began composing music in the 1840s and continued for years thereafter, eventually publishing over 500 selections, an incredible output.

By the age of 12 Root had demonstrated his musical virtuosity by playing 13 different musical instruments. After studying music in Boston (beginning in 1838) he moved to New York City in 1845, where he played the pipe organ at the Church of the Strangers and taught music at the Abbott Institute for Young Ladies. In the same year he wed Mary Olive Woodman, a union which produced two sons, Frederick Woodman and Charles, and four daughters: Clara Louise, Arabella (name not certain), May, and Nellie.

In 1850 he toured Europe and gave performances, perhaps including *The Young Ladies' Choir*, an 1846 composition.

His first song to achieve wide interest was *The Hazel Dell* (1853). Still, his reputation was untested, and in 1855 when he wrote *Rosalie, the Prairie Flower*, his offer to sell it to a publisher for $100 was refused, and he signed a royalty agreement instead. This proved to be a wise move, for *Rosalie* eventually earned him over $3,000, an incredible sum for the era.

Certain of his songs used by minstrel troupes and popular singers, including *Rosalie, the Prairie Flower*, were issued under the pseudonym G. Friedrich Wur-

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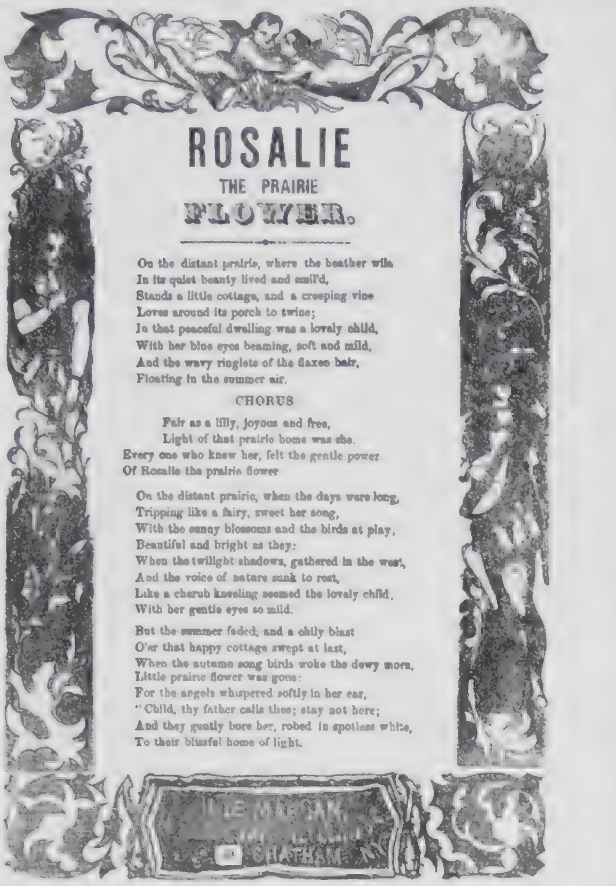
[1] "Blood Treats Gout in St. Louis," by Jack R. Detwiler, *Journal of the Civil War Token Society*, Spring 1986.



ROSALIE
THE PRAIRIE
FLOWER.

On the distant prairie, where the heather wild
In its quiet beauty lived and smil'd,
Stands a little cottage, and a creeping vine
Loves around its porch to twine;
In that peaceful dwelling was a lovely child,
With her blue eyes beaming, soft and mild,
And the wavy ringlets of the flaxen hair,
Floating in the summer air.

CHORUS

Fair as a lilly, joyous and free,
Light of that prairie home was she.
Every one who knew her, felt the gentle power
Of Rosalie the prairie flower

On the distant prairie, when the days were long,
Tripping like a fairy, sweet her song,
With the sunny blossoms and the birds at play,
Beautiful and bright as they:
When the twilight shadows, gathered in the west,
And the voice of nature sunk to rest,
Like a cherub kneeling seemed the lovely child,
With her gentle eyes so mild.

But the summer faded; and a chily blast
O'er that happy cottage swept at last,
When the autumn song birds woke the dewy morn,
Little prairie flower was gone:
For the angels whispered softly in her ear,
"Child, thy father calls thee; stay not here;
And they gently bore her, robed in spotless white,
To their blissful home of light.

Lyrics for *Rosalie, the Prairie Flower*, published by a dealer in sheet music, toys, books, etc., at 54 Chatham Street, New York City. This popular song was widely printed and distributed in the mid-nineteenth century.

zel, "Wurzel" being the German word for *root*, this to avoid diminishing his reputation as a professional organist and music teacher. However, most printed copies of his melodies were signed by his birth name.

With the emotions aroused by the Civil War George F. Root hit his stride. His rousing song published in 1862, *The Battle Cry of Freedom*, is familiar today to anyone with even a casual interest in melodies relating to the War Between the States, and the same is true for his two 1864 tunes, *Tramp! Tramp! Tramp!* and *Just Before the Battle, Mother.*

Mostly forgotten are most of his other compositions, including *The Voice of Love* (1848), *Fair Thee Well Kitty Dear* (1852), *Touch the Soft Harp Gently* (1852), *I Had a Gentle Mother* (1853), *They've Sold Me Down the River* (1853), *The Pilgrim Fathers* (1854), *Free as a Bird* (1855), *The Church Within the Wood* (1855), *Proud World Good Bye! I'm Going Home* (1855), *My Prairie Home* (1856), *Departed Days* (1857), *There's Music in the Air* (1857), *The Haymakers* (1857), *May of the Valley* (1858), *Belshazzar's Feast* (cantata with 10 scenes, 28 songs, 1860), *The Vacant Chair, or, We Shall Meet But We Shall Miss Him* (1861), *The First Gun Is Fired!* (1861), *De Day Ob Liberty's Comin'* (1862), *Farewell Father, Friend and Guardian* (1865), *Starved in Prison* (1865), *Glory! Glory! Glory! Or, The Little Octoroon* (1866), *Multiplication Song* (1867), *The Pacific Railroad* (1869; the year the transcontinental railroad was completed), *Southland, Southland, Rise Again to Life* (1872), *Short Speech Sufficeth* (1877), *Rock of Ages (A Song of Life)* (1879; not the famous hymn by the same title), and three songs written for the election campaign of James G. Blaine in 1884, *The People's Choice, Blaine for Our President,* and *The Plumed Knight.*

He was a partner in the Chicago music publishing firm of Root & Cady, which issued songbooks and also sold instruments and published a magazine, *The Song Messenger of the Northwest.* In 1872 the University of Chicago bestowed upon Root an honorary Doctor of Music degree.

In 1891, The John Church Company, Cincinnati, published his *The Story of a Musical Life: An Autobiography.* Root lived for several more years and died at the age of 74 on Bailey Island, Maine, on August 6, 1895.[1]

Bennett's *Prairie Flower*

While *Rosalie, the Prairie Flower* was well-known to Cincinnatians in 1863 when John Stanton cut the dies for his illustrious Indian princess token with THE PRAIRIE FLOWER inscription, there is an even earlier connection, this one directly with Cincinnati.

In Cincinnati and St. Louis in 1849, Emerson Bennett's novel, *The Prairie Flower,* was published by Stratton & Barnard. In 1850 a revised edition was issued in Cincinnati by U.P. James. From the latter, we read of two frontiersmen on the prairie, who encounter an *Indian maiden known as the Prairie Flower,* seemingly a direct inspiration for Stanton's token:

> "Stand back! stand back! She comes! she comes!" I heard whispered on all sides of me.
>
> "Look, Frank—look!" said Huntly, in a suppressed voice, clutching my arm nervously.
>
> I did look; and what I beheld I feel myself incompetent to describe and do the subject justice. Before me, perfectly erect, her tiny feet scarce seeming to touch the ground she trod, was a being which required no great stretch of imagination to fancy just dropped from some celestial sphere. She was a little above medium in stature, as straight as an arrow, and with a form as symmetrical and faultless as a Venus. Twenty summers (I could not realize she had ever seen a winter) had molded her features into what I may term a classic beauty, as if chiseled from marble by the hand

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[1] Sources for information include Benjamin Robert Tubb's web page, "The Music of George Frederick Root (1820-1895)."

of a master. Her skin was dark, but not more so than a Creole's, and with nothing of the brownish or reddish hue of the native Indian. It was beautifully clear too, and apparently of a velvet-like softness. Her hair was a glossy black, and her hazel eyes were large and lustrous, fringed with long lashes, and arched by fine, penciled brows.

Her profile was straight from forehead to chin, and her full face oval, lighted with a soul of feeling, fire and intelligence. A well formed mouth, guarded by two plump lips, was adorned by a beautiful set of teeth, partially displayed when she spoke or smiled. A slightly aquiline nose gave an air of decision to the whole countenance, and rendered its otherwise almost too effeminate expression, noble, lofty and commanding.

Her costume was singular, and such as could not fail to attract universal attention. A scarlet waistcoat concealed a well developed bust, to which were attached short sleeves and skirts—the latter coming barely to the knees, something after the fashion of the short frock worn by the danseuse of the present day. These skirts were showily embroidered with wampum, and wampum belt passed around her waist, in which glittered a silver-mounted Spanish dirk. From the frock downward, leggins and moccasins beautifully wrought into various figures with beads, enclosed the legs and feet. A tiara of many colored feathers, to which were attached little bells that tinkled as she walked, surmounted the head; and a bracelet of pearls on either well rounded arm, with a necklace of the same material, completed her costume and ornaments.

With a proud carriage, and an unabashed look from her dark, eloquent eye, she advanced a few paces, glanced loftily around upon the surprised and admiring spectators, and then struck the palms of her hands together in rapid succession. In a moment her Indian pony came prancing to her side. With a single bound she vaulted into the saddle, and gracefully waving us a silent adieu, instantly vanished through the open gateway.

Rushing out of the fort, the excited crowd barely caught one more glimpse of her beautiful form, ere it became completely lost in the neighboring forest.

"Who is she? who can she be?" cried a dozen persons at once.

"Prairie Flower…."[1]

Prairie Flower Tokens

Stanton made two dies with THE PRAIRIE FLOWER inscription and the portrait of an Indian princess, one undated and known today as Fuld 1068, and the other dated 1863 and known as Fuld 1069.[2]

Larry Dziubek, in the *Journal of the Civil War Token Society*, Fall 1986, studied certain dies and, among other things, gave this state-by-state distribution of merchants using Stanton's 1863-dated THE PRAIRIE FLOWER die:

> Alabama: (1 merchant used the die), Illinois (6), Indiana, (10), Kentucky (2), Michigan (13), Missouri (1), New York (1), Ohio (101), Pennsylvania (9), Tennessee, (4), and Wisconsin (1).

For my own collection of Civil War tokens I have sought to find one each of as many different varieties as possible, and over a period of years have obtained perhaps half of the known pieces, including a dozen or more copper-nickel pieces that are said to have been struck to the extent of just one impression. Most of these trace their pedigree to the collection of Virgil M. Brand (1861-1926), the Chicago numismatist. Certain of these later appeared in a sale conducted by Harmer-Rooke Numismatists in 1969. Certain others that went to Horace Brand (one of Virgil's two brothers, the other being Armin) were sold to the New Netherlands Coin Co. in the 1950s and then resold *en bloc* to Donald M. Miller, the well-known Pennsylvania numismatist.[3]

Most varieties of the 1069 die have reeded edges, but there are exceptions, such as its use with a B. Hempleman (Cincinnati dealer in groceries and feed) die, struck in copper and with a plain edge.

I should also mention an item which I have never owned and probably never will—unless I can talk the

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[1] As stated by Henry R. Wagner, *The Plains the Rockies IV*, p. 162: "This work probably first appeared in the periodical Great West in 1848 when Emerson Bennett was its editor. It describes the travels of a party of young men who crossed the Rocky Mountains to California. Sidney W. Moss, who traveled west with the party of Lansford W. Hastings in 1842, stated later that he wrote the story and gave it to Overton Johnson, who returned to the states in 1844. Moss asserted that Emerson Bennett somehow obtained the manuscript and published it as his own." (Cf. Dorothy Sloan's Auction Catalogue Nine (Library of Ben E. Pingenot, Austin, Texas, September 22, 2000). • Harold A. Blaine, in an unpublished 1936 doctoral thesis for Western Reserve University, "The Frontiersman in American Prose Fiction: 1800-1860," the claim is made that Bennett extensively plagiarized George F. Ruxton's earlier work, *Adventures in Mexico and Life in the Far West.* However, a skimming of the Ruxton text reveals that if there was plagiarism, it did not involve the sketch of the Prairie Flower maiden. • *The Empire that Missouri Pacific Serves*, published by the Missouri Pacific Railroad in the 1950s and in 2001 maintained on a website by the Kansas State Library, includes a commentary on the town of Leoti, Kansas: "According to Indian legend, Leoti means 'Prairie Flower,' yet this town was referred to in the early days as 'The Prairie Queen.' Said to be the oldest town in Kansas, Leoti was named by the townsite company when it was founded in 1885."

[2] Die with portrait shallowly punched, with field area to left of ninth feather; this is from the same Indian head hub punch used on various dies dated 1863 and 1864 by the same maker; examples include nos. 1018 to 1045, 1046 (dated 1864), 1046A (dated 1864), 1047 (dated 1864), and the presently discussed 1068 and 1069.

[3] C.f. note to the author from Dr. George J. Fuld, 2001.

Durham Western Heritage Museum, Omaha, into trading or selling it—an unlikely possibility, although at one time the institution did dispose of a vast number of scarce and rare issues. This is the combination of Stanton's THE PRAIRIE FLOWER die with a die issued for J.M. Longwell, sutler, 119th U.S. Cavalry. During the Civil War, sutlers were licensed to travel with army units and to sell accessories including writing paper, stamps, patent medicines, books, and other items that contributed to a soldier's contentment (such as it was), goods that in the parlance of the time included "Yankee notions." Larry Lee, curator of the Byron Reed Collection displayed at the Omaha museum, allowed me to examine the token carefully during a visit there in 1999, and later sent me a photograph of it.[1] So far as I know, it is unique. However, more attention is paid, by far, to the famous 1804 silver dollar which is the centerpoint of the display.

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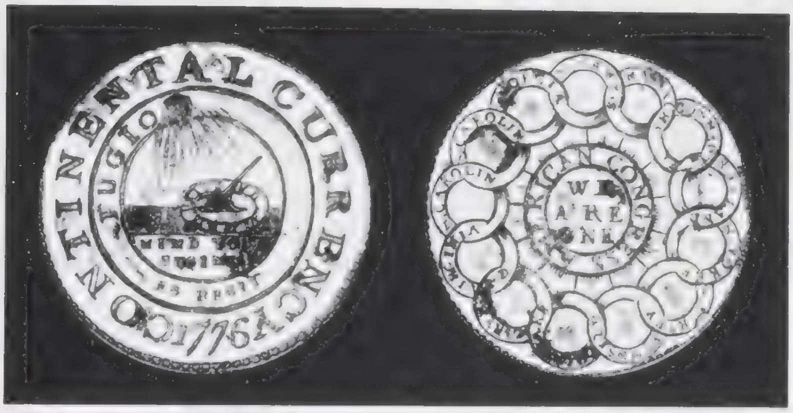
[1] In 2001 Larry Lee left the Durham Western Heritage Museum to accept a position as curator of the American Numismatic Association Museum, Colorado Springs.

ADVENTURE NO. 3

THE 1776 CONTINENTAL CURRENCY DOLLAR



The Continental Currency dollar of 1776 was struck in pewter to the extent of an estimated thousand of pieces, employing several different die combinations. A few were struck in brass and silver as well.

The inscription "EG FECIT" means "E.G. made it," a reference to an engraver identified as Elisha Gallaudet by twentieth-century numismatic scholar Eric P. Newman. (Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr. Collection, 1996, Lot 50)

* * *

A Dollar in Pewter

A true early American classic in the genre of the 1652-dated Massachusetts Pine Tree shilling is the next "adventure" subject:

Today, one of the more popular coins among early American issues is the 1776 Continental Currency dollar. Although hundreds exist, the demand for them by collectors is seemingly insatiable, and whenever a decent example comes on the market it is an object of attention and desire.

The 1776 Continental Currency coins, long called "dollars" by numismatists, but now sometimes referred to simply as coins or currency, are from dies cut in New Jersey by Elisha Gallaudet. The obverse bears a sundial with the inscription, attributed to Benjamin Franklin, "FUGIO," or "I fly," referring to the rapid passage of time.[1]

The reverse consists of a series of interlocking rings inscribed with abbreviated names of the states. The die inscriptions were made from individual letter punches. The abbreviations and punctuation in some instances are somewhat rustic, as in these examples: N. HAMP.S; MASSACHS; CONNECT.T; N. YORKE; PENNSILV; N,CAROLIN; and S,CAROLIN.

Probably somewhere between 500 and 1,000 Continental Currency pewter dollars exist today, plus a few struck in brass and silver. Although no legislation authorizing these pewter coins has been located, it seems reasonable that the 1776 Continental Currency pewter coins saw service as a fiat or non-intrinsic dollar, simply taking the place of Continental Currency paper notes, some $1 issues of which had a similar design.

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[1] A similar motif, but with certain differences in the inscription, was employed on the 1787 Fugio copper cents made under federal contract by James Jarvis and others.

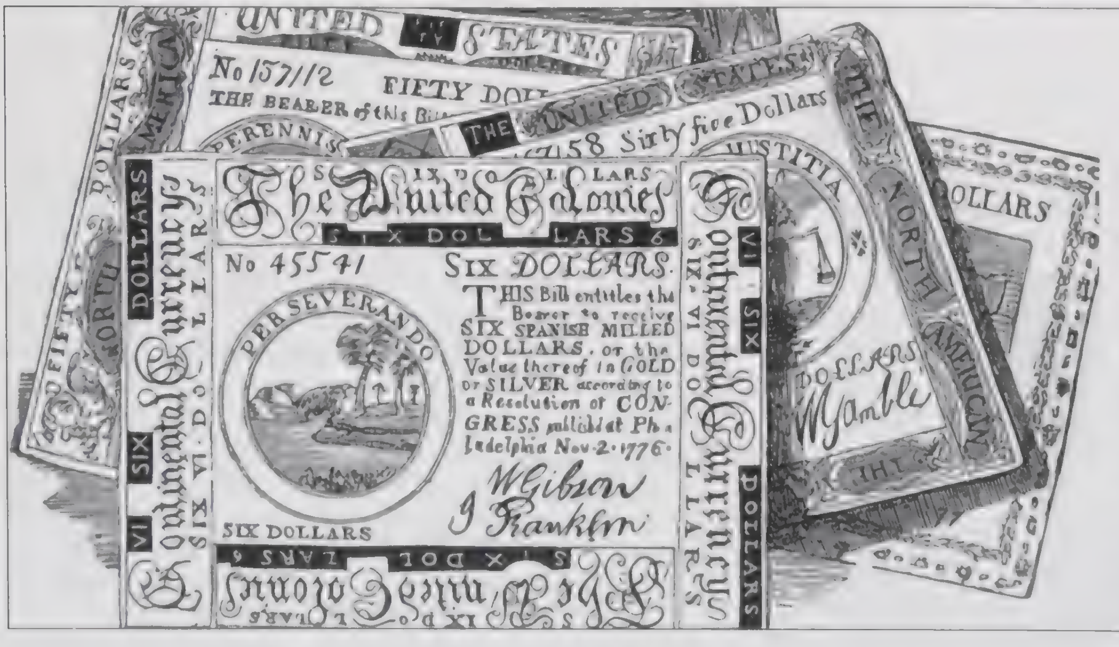
A Commentary Printed in 1850

One of my favorite references to consult is Benson J. Lossing's two-volume *Pictorial Field-Book of the Revolution,* published in 1850 by Harper & Brothers, New York, and issued in several bindings after that time. In my book, *American Numismatics Before the Civil War, 1760-1860,* some account is given of Lossing, who used many coin illustrations in his *Field-Book* and other works relating to history. In recognition of this, he was given an honorary membership in the American Numismatic Society. In my first "adventure" I mentioned that Lossing was among those who repeated the legend of the daughter of mintmaster Hull being placed on a scale, and her dowry being paid in an equivalent weight of Massachusetts silver coins.

Curiously, no specific records have ever been located concerning the authorization for this dollar, struck in a pewter-like metal. This is one of the great discoveries waiting to happen—if, indeed, such records exist. I and some (but not all) others believe that such pieces were struck in 1776 to replace the $1 paper notes of somewhat similar design (sundial and link motif), when production of $1 notes was suspended for a time.[1]

Lossing in his *Field-Book,* Vol. I, pp. 316-318, illustrates the coin (engraving reproduced below) and adds this commentary (which, it should be remembered, was written by 1850, by which time no American numismatic reference books had been published, and knowledge was scant):

> The resolution [by the Continental Congress] providing for the first emission of bills was adopted on the 22nd of June, 1775, and was as follows:
>
> "*Resolved,* That a sum not exceeding two millions of Spanish milled dollars be emitted by the Congress in bills of credit, for the defense of America."
>
> On the next day the committee appointed for the occasion reported and offered resolutions (which were adopted) as follows:
>
> "*Resolved,* That the number and denomination of the bills to be emitted be as follows:
>
> 49,000 bills of 8 dollars each, $392,000
> 49,000 bills of 7 dollars each, $343,000
> 49,000 bills of 6 dollars each, $294,000
> 49,000 bills of 5 dollars each, $245,000
> 49,000 bills of 4 dollars each, $196,000
> 49,000 bills of 3 dollars each, $147,000
> 49,000 bills of 2 dollars each, $98,000
> 49,000 bills of 1 dollar each, $49,000
> 11,800 bills of 20 dollars each, $236,000
> Total: 403,800 bills, $2,000,000....
>
> The paper on which these bills were printed was quite thick, and the enemy called it "the *pasteboard* money of the rebels." The vignettes were generally, both in device and motto, significant. The one most prominent in the engraving [reproduced below] represents a beaver in the slow but sure process of cutting down a tree with its teeth. The motto, "PERSEVERANDO—*by Perseverance,´* said to the colonists, "Persist, and you will be successful."...
>
> [On another bill the design depicts] a circular chain bearing on each link the name of a state, an emblem of


UNITED STATES
No 157112
FIFTY DOLL
THE BEARER of this Bi
PERENNIS
THE UNITED STATES
58 Sixty five Dollars
JUSTITIA
THE NORTH AMERICAN
DOLLARS
DOLLARS
Wamble
The United Colonies
SIX DOLLARS
No 45541
SIX DOLLARS.
THIS Bill entitles the Bearer to receive SIX SPANISH MILLED DOLLARS, or the Value thereof in GOLD or SILVER according to a Resolution of CONGRESS publish'd at Philadelphia Nov. 2. 1776.
W Gibson
J Franklin
PERSEVERANDO
Continental Currency
VI SIX DOLLARS
SIX VI DOLLARS

Several different varieties of Continental Currency notes as illustrated in Benson J. Lossing's *Field-Book of the Revolution,* Vol. I. These notes were payable in the most popular silver coins then circulating in North America, the Spanish milled dollars (a.k.a. eight-real coins).

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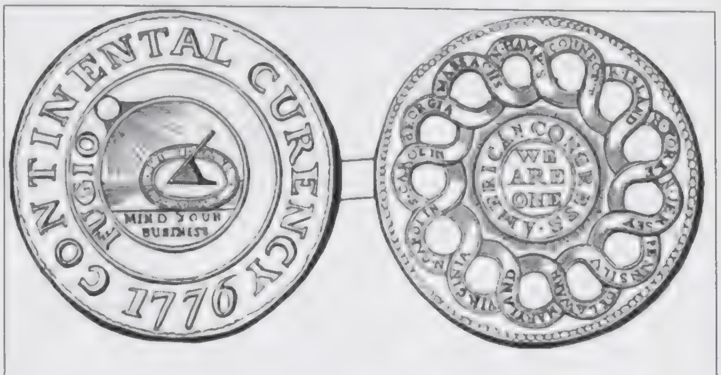
[1] Eric P. Newman (letter, June 22, 2001) takes a different view: "I think your comment about the circulation of the Continental Currency dollars has no support. It is alleged that the tin ones were shown or given to Continental Congress representatives, but there is no proof of that either."

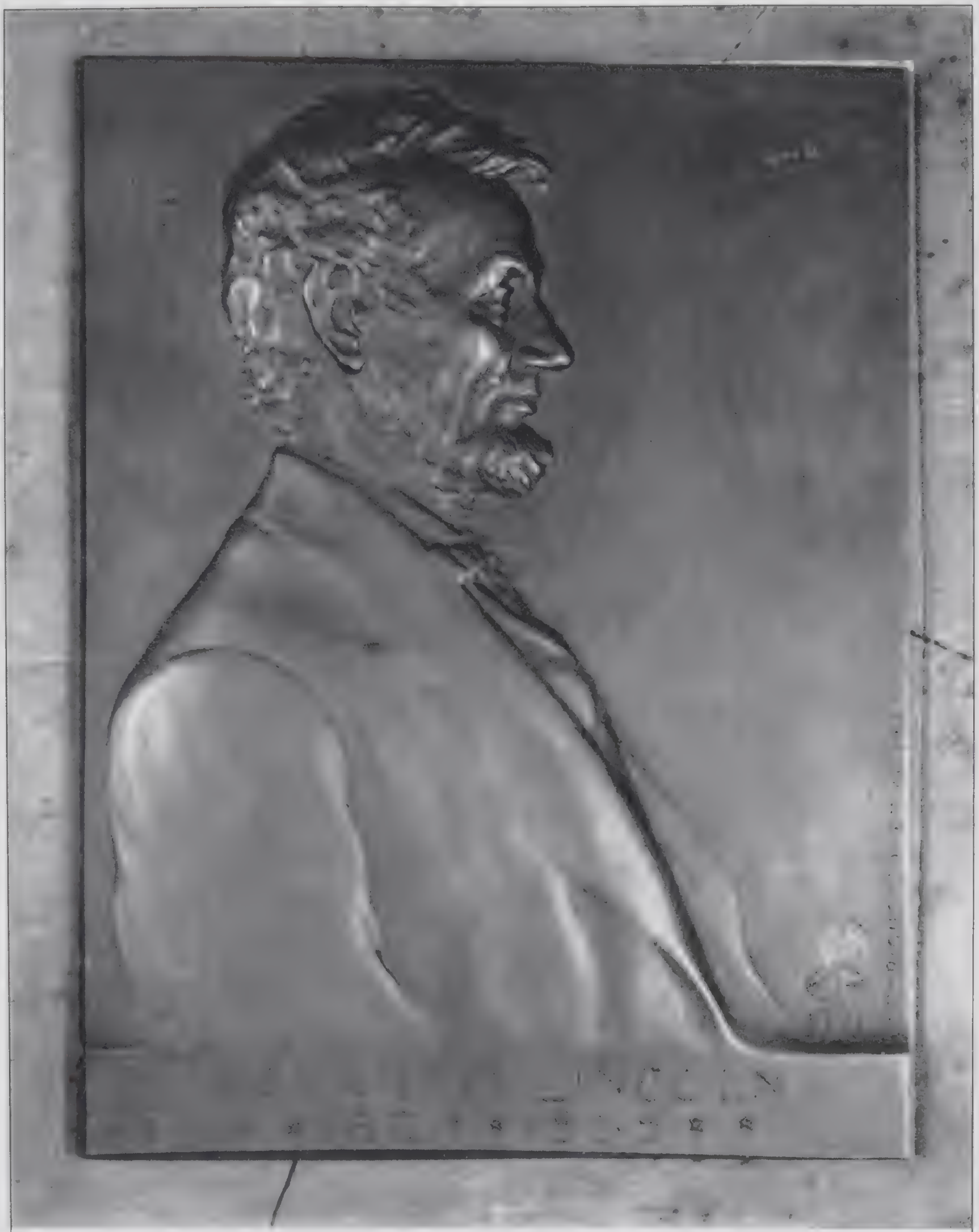
> union; motto, "WE ARE ONE." I have in my possession a coin, made of some composition resembling German silver of the present day (of which the following is a fac-simile of the proper size), bearing the same device on one side....
>
> On the 25th of July, 1775, the Continental Congress ordered the issuing of one million dollars more, and from time to time new emissions were authorized....
>
> As the signing of so many bills would require more time than the members could spare from public duties, Congress appointed 28 gentlemen to perform the duty, allowing each one $1.33 for every 1,000 bills signed and numbered by him. It was necessary for each bill to have the signature of two of them....



Engraving of the 1776 Continental Currency dollar in pewter, from Lossing's *Field-Book of the Revolution,* Vol. I. Historian Lossing was very much interested in coins and used many different types to illustrate his various books.

The issuance of pewter versions of the Continental Currency dollar—the coin discussed here—would have saved the expense of signing notes and would have created a coin that was more durable than paper. This signing by proxy has been forgotten by many modern numismatists, who assume that a note signed by an important person—such as an individual who also signed (really) the Declaration of Independence—is authentic.

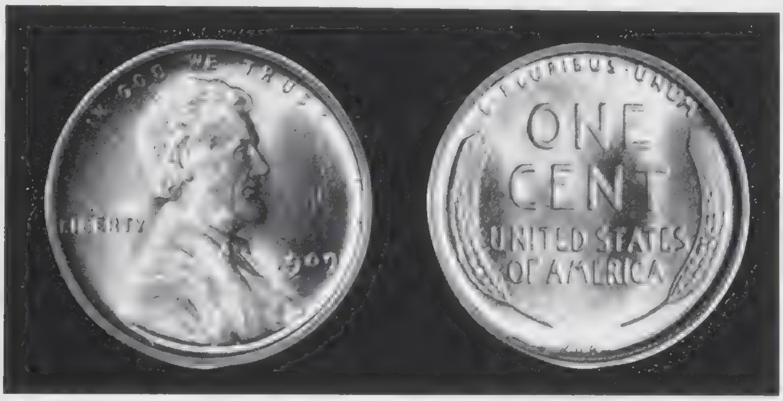
Similarly, after President Abraham Lincoln in 1861 appointed Francis E. Spinner as secretary of the Treasury, one of the requirements was that paper money bear his inked signature. Over a dozen women were trained to copy Spinner's florid handwriting.



Abraham Lincoln plaque from 1907 by Victor David Brenner. In 1908, Brenner proposed to President Theodore Roosevelt that his Lincoln portrait be used on a coin. Roosevelt was intrigued by the idea and suggested that Brenner prepare designs. This eventually led to the famous 1909 V.D.B. cent. (The Harry W. Bass, Jr. Collection, Part I, May 1999, Lot 2102)

ADVENTURE NO. 4

THE CONTROVERSIAL 1909 V.D.B. LINCOLN CENT



The 1909 Lincoln cent made its debut on August 2, 1909, and immediately created a sensation. The initials V.D.B. on the reverse, being the "signature" of engraver Victor David Brenner, were criticized for their prominence. Soon, they were removed, isolating the 1909 V.D.B. and a related issue, struck in San Francisco with an "S" mintmark as the only cents of their type.

Today, the 1909 V.D.B. cent is plentiful and inexpensive, although the San Francisco Mint version, the 1909-S V.D.B., is elusive (but when encountered is apt to be in relatively high grades, EF to Mint State).

* * *

Roosevelt and Artistic Coinage

In 1905 President Theodore Roosevelt contacted sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens, whose studio and residence were in Cornish, New Hampshire, and began discussions which resulted in a commission to redesign the American coinage. Although sketches and even some models were made for several different denominations, only the 1907 Indian $10 and MCMVII (1907) "Victory" $20 gold were ever produced. The artist, afflicted with cancer, died on August 3, 1907, the rest of his commission unfulfilled.[1]

Roosevelt contemplated other options, and in 1908 the commission to redesign the other gold denominations, the $2.50 and $5, went to Bela Lyon Pratt, a Massachusetts sculptor who had been a student of Saint-Gaudens. In the same year, Roosevelt considered the impending centennial, 1809-1909, of Abraham Lincoln's birth, and thought it would be desirable to investigate using his image on coins, the idea encouraged by the proposal of another artist, Victor David Brenner.

Unlike Saint-Gaudens and Pratt, Brenner was a dedicated numismatist. He had joined the American Numismatic and Archaeological Society years earlier, on November 19, 1894. In 1902 he was an instructor at the short-lived School for Die Cutting set up in New York by the Society, a venture intended to further artistic concepts in medal dies. In September of the same year *The Numismatist* listed him as new member 434 in the American Numismatic Association. Around the same time Brenner's other activities included making medallic dies in the private sector, employing the Janvier portrait lathe in the shop of the Deitsch brothers, New York City medalists and badge manufacturers, to reduce his models to die-size.[1] In 1903 his Amerigo Vespucci medal, of rectangular plaque format (popular at the time; the annual Assay Commission medals at the Mint were made this way as well), attracted modest attention, and it was reported that 59 were produced. Other designs were made and sold to an ever-widening group of collectors who were reviving the honorable tradition that among his possessions, the gentleman of refinement and distinction might include a cabinet of fine medals.

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[1] More about Saint-Gaudens awaits you under Adventure No. 32.

In 1907, Brenner produced a medal and plaque of Lincoln, the last being of rectangular format and made by electrotyping. At least two sizes were produced, probably to the extent of several hundred or more. Over a long period of years I have handled, perhaps, 15 to 20 or so. The image featured a head and shoulders portrait of the martyred president, facing right, with ABRAHAM LINCOLN and 1809-1865 below, and with COPYRIGHT 1907 BY V.D. BRENNER and the artist's monogram in smaller letters along the right edge.

From March 7 to 23, 1907, a special display at a literary organization in New York City was described by the *Catalogue of Medals and Plaques by Victor D. Brenner, exhibited at the Grolier Club, March 7 to March 23, 1907*, for which Brenner wrote the introduction.[2]

Brenner Busy in 1908

In 1908 Brenner discussed his Lincoln plaque with President Roosevelt, and the idea was born to use it on coinage, ideally the one-cent piece it turned out, as the Indian Head design had been in use for a half century and was an ideal candidate to be replaced. Besides, it was easy to view the rich brown surface of the plaque and envision how the same portrait, but sharply reduced, could be employed on the cent. Not much was said about the proposal in public, and numismatists and others were generally unaware of the germinating plan. In fact, for a long time no denomination in particular was mentioned in connection with use of the Lincoln design.

In the same year, Victor David Brenner produced the design for a pin-back suspension medal, made by Tiffany & Company, to be worn at the opening ceremony of the new American Numismatic Society building on Audubon Terrace, a beautiful setting at 155th Street and Broadway, one of the more upscale sections of Manhattan.[3] A number of wealthy patrons including railroad heir Archer Huntington provided most of the financing. The date of the opening, April 6, was picked as the 50th anniversary of the official founding of the Society, which had taken place in the family apartment of teenage collector and dealer Augustus B. Sage, up a flight of stairs at 121 Essex Street, New York City.

Victor David Brenner was among the founders and early supporters of the New York Numismatic Club, which was organized on December 11, 1908, at Keen's Old English Chop House, a fine restaurant that served as a popular numismatic gathering spot for years thereafter. Displayed and mounted on the ceiling were hundreds if not thousands of churchwarden pipes belonging to different patrons. The second meeting of the club—usually considered to be the date of founding—in January 1909, saw Brenner in the illustrious company of such numismatists as Joseph Mitchelson, Elliot Smith, Albert R. Frey, Frank Higgins, Edgar H. Adams, D. Macon Webster, Thomas L. Elder, William H. Woodin, George H. Blake, Wayte Raymond, and Bauman L. Belden. Later, the club met in other venues.

In the meantime, Brenner and Roosevelt continued their discussion for a new "Lincoln coin." Although Washington and Lincoln had appeared on pattern issues of the 1860s, as of 1908 no American president had ever appeared on a federal coin made for widespread regular circulation, although a commemorative coin dated 1900, the Lafayette dollar, had borne the portrait of George Washington. On the other hand, Lincoln had appeared on certain currency notes during his lifetime.

Birth of the Lincoln Cent

On January 30, 1909, a note was sent from the Treasury Department to the editor of *The Numismatist:*

> President Roosevelt has given his consent to the placing of the head of Lincoln on one of the popular coins. He conferred today with Director Leach, of the Mint, and details are now under advisement. Victor D. Brenner, the New York sculptor, has submitted to the director some models of Lincoln busts, and these have been shown to the president. The head of Lincoln will adorn one side of the coin and the customary coat of arms the other.
>
> It is probable that the half dollar piece will be selected as the principal coin to bear the Lincoln

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[1] David T. Alexander, "The Circle of Friends of the Medallion: An Appreciation in American Medallic History," *American Numismatic Association Centennial Anthology*, 1991. • In 1983 and 1984 Brenner's productions were detailed by Glenn B. Smedley in "The Works of Victor David Brenner, a Descriptive Listing," in *The Numismatist*.

[2] Nearly a century later, in autumn 2001, the Grolier Club mounted a display of classical (not American) numismatic books with the cooperation of the American Numismatic Society.

[3] The *American Journal of Numismatics*, 1907-1908, pp. 150-152, includes an account of this event.

> head, but some legislation may be necessary to make the change.

Subsequently, Director Frank A. Leach wrote to *The Numismatist:* "Nothing has yet been decided upon in relation to the proposed issue of a coin bearing the head of Lincoln. The matter is only under discussion."[1]

However, by this time models had been submitted to the Engraving Department at the Philadelphia Mint, and the staff was busy at work on a new coin, not yet identified as being of the cent denomination. Originally a reverse was proposed featuring a design with a single sprig in the center, inspired by the French two-franc piece. Another idea proposed the standing figure of Miss Liberty, also modeled after a French coin. These were rejected, and a reverse depicting two symmetrically-arranged wheat stalks was used, these being stylistic and modern, rather than from nature.

The March 1909 issue of the same periodical told of progress, under the title of "Lincoln to Appear on Cent." It was revealed that "several months may pass before the long familiar Indian cent will be displaced by a proposed new issue which will have for its main device the head of Lincoln. The designs for the coins are the product of Victor D. Brenner, and since their acceptance, Mr. Brenner has been kept very busy making the suggested, slight but time-consuming changes...." Finally, the dies were cut by Henry Weil, of New York, using Brenner's models.

The July issue of the same magazine noted:

> Coinage of the Lincoln cent has been in progress at the Philadelphia Mint for some time. The number of one-cent pieces coined in June, 22,213,575, are believed all to be of the new type. No advance coinage of the Lincoln cent has been made at any of the branch mints. It is not believed that any of the specimens, except a very few for inspection by government officials, have left the custody of the chief coiner.

The New Cent Is Released

On August 2, 1909, the first Lincoln cents were released into circulation. A mad dash ensued, and all available pieces were quickly scooped up. In the same month *The Numismatist* related:

> Notwithstanding the advance coinage, the demand for them in Philadelphia was so great that only a limited distribution was made to an individual. Banks were supplied with a portion of their order; at the mint two specimens only to a customer; at the Sub-Treasury 100 was the most anyone could purchase.
>
> Newsboys and others, taking advantage of the interest in the new coin, obtained them in hundred lots and found customers at from 2 for 5c to 25c each.

Those Pesky Initials

All was not well with the new cents. Although this was not heralded in publicity, in honor of the designer the initials V.D.B. were visible at the bottom of the reverse for all to see. Soon a controversy arose concerning the initials. Some said that as Brenner had been paid for his design, what he did was strictly as a workman, and no recognition was needed. Others said that the letters were too prominent, and that few knew what the possibly cabalistic notation meant.

Complaints were registered, and demands were made that the letters be dropped. All of this defied numismatic tradition, for in 1907 Augustus Saint-Gaudens boldly signed his new $20 piece with his ASG monogram in the obverse field. As far back as the days of ancient Greece, artists had signed their names to dies, sometimes in full, as with KIMON on certain silver decadrachms of Syracuse. Within memory, James B. Longacre's initials, J.B.L., appeared on nearly all of the gold coins of the second half of the nineteenth century, continuing to 1907-8.

Fault was also found with the wheat stalks on the reverse of the cent, as they did not represent this species of grain in true life. Other news items included complaints that Southerners did not like Lincoln to begin with, and that the use of his portrait on the cent was unfortunate (in contrast, it was said that black citizens eagerly snatched up these souvenirs of the Great Emancipator). About all that was *not* said is that the Mint was recalling them. Otherwise, it was the most publicized new coin since the 1883 Liberty Head nickel without CENTS.

Soon thereafter, Brenner wrote to Farran Zerbe, the president of the American Numismatic Association:[2]

> It is mighty hard for me to express my sentiments with regard to the initials on the cent. The name of an artist on the coin is essential for the student of history as it enables him to trace environments and conditions of the time said coin was produced.
>
> Much fume has been made about my initials as a means of advertisement; such is not the case. The very talk of the initials has done more good for numismatics than it could do me personally. The cent not alone

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[1] Apparently, the final decision to use the cent denomination was made in March, per the *Report of the Director of the Mint,* 1909: "New Design for the One-Cent Piece: With the approval of the Secretary of the Treasury the new design for the bronze one-cent piece was adopted in April 1909. On the obverse the head of Lincoln appears instead of the Indian head which this piece had borne since 1864. The engraver of the mint at Philadelphia was instructed to prepare dies, and coinage of this piece was commenced in May...."

[2] Quoted in *The Numismatist,* September-October 1909.

> represents in part my art, but represents a type of art of our period.
>
> The conventionalizing of the sheafs of wheat was done by me with much thought, and I feel that with the prescribed wording no better design could be obtained. The cent will wear out two of the last ones in time, due entirely to the hollow surface. The original design had BRENNER on it, that was changed to the initials. Of course, the issue rests with the numismatic bodies, and Europe will watch the outcome with interest.

From August 9 through 14, the American Numismatic Association had its annual convention, this year in Montreal. Over 50 members were there in person, and about 450 others were represented by proxies. On Thursday, August 12, the business meeting of the Association was held. Thomas L. Elder, chairman of the Coinage Improvement Committee, reported that he had written to President William Howard Taft, who had been in office since March as Roosevelt's successor, to urge him to change the motifs of the half dollar, quarter, dime, and nickel.

"The present designs, it has been the opinion of the leading numismatists, are inartistic and unsuitable."

This elicited a reply from a representative of the Treasury, which stated that it was possible to change the design of the five-cent nickel piece, as 25 years had elapsed since its adoption, but that under current rules no change could be made to the half dollar, quarter, and dime until 1917, as these motifs had been adopted in 1892.

"At the present time it is not possible to state whether any legislation by Congress may be expected in the near future, relative to changes in the designs of the half and quarter dollar, and the dime."

Among other business, it was learned that the new Lincoln cents bearing the initials of Victor D. Brenner on the reverse, V.D.B., would be changed to eliminate the engraver's signature, so a resolution was made calling for the continuation of the original design.

While it would have been nice if numismatists could have decided the issue on its merits, the Mint did not listen, and the offending V.D.B. letters were discontinued. By that time President Roosevelt had been succeeded in office by William Howard Taft, who took no real interest in coinage matters.

Fame

The 1909 V.D.B. cent, of which 27,995,000 were struck, remained plentiful for a long time—sort of a replay of the 1883 without CENTS nickel (see Adventure No. 19), but lacking the follow-up advertisements by hobby dealers proclaiming their rarity. Today, they are plentiful in all grades from well worn to red Mint State, the latter usually with some spotting; tens of thousands of Mint State coins exist from hoards. In the 1950s these pieces were so plentiful in circulation that a handful of circulated examples could be obtained in an afternoon's looking through bank-wrapped rolls of cents.

On the other hand, the San Francisco Mint version, the 1909-S V.D.B., of which 484,000 were struck, quickly became recognized as *scarce*, later as *rare*. These little coppers, with a tiny "S" below the 1909 date, and with the initials V.D.B. on the reverse, fired the imagination of several generations who hoped to find a treasure in their pockets someday. Over the years thousands were plucked from circulation, but never enough to fill the even more thousands of "penny" boards and albums with a yawning "1909-S V.D.B." hole. At the time of issue many Mint State coins were saved, but surprisingly few in roll quantities (I have never handled an original bank-wrapped Mint State roll, a significant statement in my opinion, in view of the rarities I *have* handled).

Probably several tens of thousands of 1909-S V.D.B. cents exist today, including a few thousand Mint State coins, the latter mostly MS-60 to 63 with some areas of toning. The late Gobel Ziemer, Owego, New York, antique dealer, related to me that as a young lad living in San Francisco he was on the steps of the San Francisco Mint in August 1909 when the new 1909-S V.D.B. cents were being distributed, and from the first they sold for a premium. (Most Lincoln cents were distributed through the Treasury Department, not from the Mint itself, but apparently a few were given out at the Mint.) Ziemer maintained his numismatic interest for many years, and sometime in the 1960s I purchased his large collection of gold coins.[1]

In the "road not taken" department, he also introduced me to a Mr. Faber, who circa 1960 lived near Owego and had a whole barn filled with millions of cigar box labels. He had even written a monograph on them. He wanted to know if I would buy the *tons* of these he had, but envisioning no market or use for them, I declined. Today, many of these same labels would sell from a dollar or two up to well over $10 to $20 apiece!

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[1] As a number of other numismatists have also done, Ziemer also collected music boxes. In 1960 I purchased from him a very nice cylinder box, circa 1895, made by Mermod Frérès of St. Croix, Switzerland. This was later sold to professional numismatist Jerome L. Cohen. In recent decades numismatists Kenneth Goldman and Mark Yaffe, among others, have built beautiful music box collections.

ADVENTURE NO. 5

A MEMORABLE 1894-S BARBER DIME

A little 1894-S dime, a variety that caused a lot of the commotion in 1957 when it was sold for an amazing $4,750. (The Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr. Collection, Lot 1250)

A "Biographical" Coin

In November 1957, Stack's in New York City offered for sale what was billed as the Empire Collection, a cabinet rich in United States copper and silver coins. The owner, not disclosed by Stack's at the time, but subsequently mentioned in the catalogues of a competitor, the New Netherlands Coin Company, was Charles A. Cass.

Among the highlights of the Empire Collection was a specimen of a particularly rare dime, the 1894-S, an example of which I had never owned, but which through reading old issues of *The Numismatist* and auction catalogues I had come to appreciate as an American numismatic landmark.

At the time I was a student at the Pennsylvania State University, a sophomore majoring in finance. Although I had arranged my class schedule to permit attending some coin shows and auctions, the November 1957 event did not fit in conveniently. However, my closest friend in the coin trade, Jim Ruddy, who operated the Triple Cities Coin Exchange in Johnson City, New York, was planning to go. I discussed the 1894-S dime with him.

What was it worth? Values were not carefully studied in the market at the time, and opinions were apt to vary widely. It was known that an 1804 silver dollar had sold for $8,000 in 1954, and guesses were that an 1804 dollar, if sold in 1957, might bring $12,000 to $16,000, for the market was rising. However, little was known about the 1894-S dime.

Jim Ruddy and I conferred on the telephone, and after much discussion we concluded that $4,750 would be the highest price he would bid for me. However, there was a good chance that it could have been bought for a lot less, perhaps $2,500 to $3,000. No one knew.

At the sale, held in Steinway Hall a few steps away from Stack's coin store, Donald D'Amato, an auctioneer who conducted sales for various firms including New Netherlands Coin Company, was at the podium. The coin opened up at about two or three thousand dollars, and went in $250 increments upward.[1] Finally, at $4,500 the last other bidder dropped out. Four thousand, seven hundred and fifty dollars! The coin went to Jim Ruddy! Excitement prevailed. Never before in American numismatics had so much been paid—or even close to it—for a dime!

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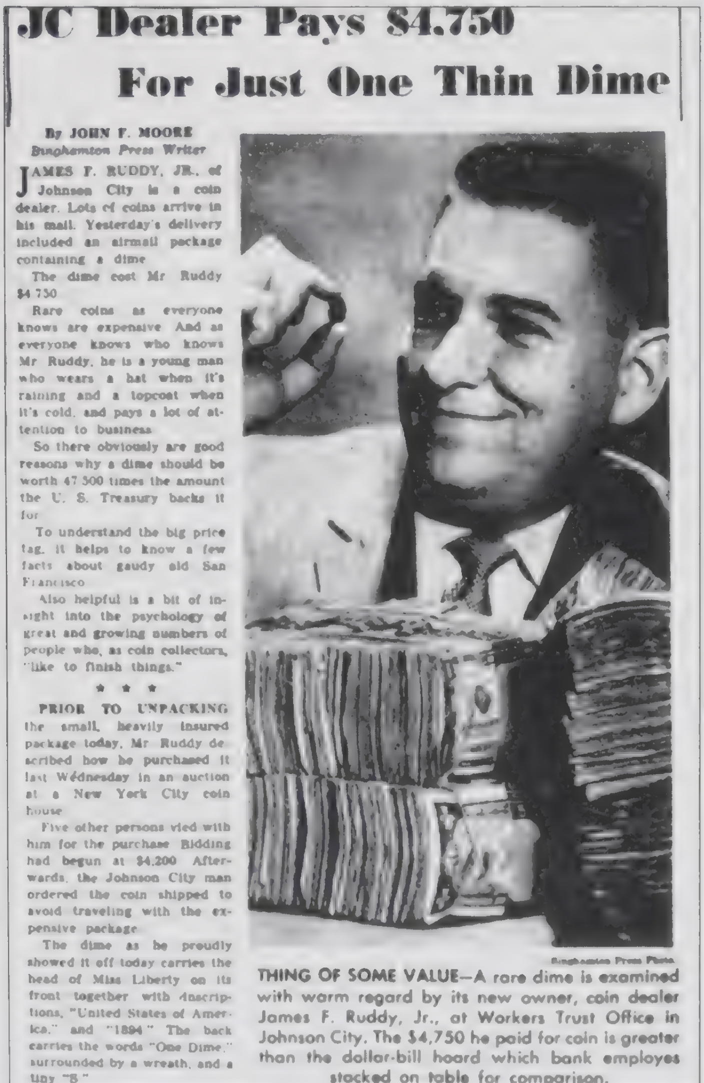
[1] In a conversation with James F. Ruddy, February 20, 2001, the writer and Jim discussed the event, and he could not recall the exact opening price, but remembered that there was room for much action before the final figure was reached.

A newspaperman got hold of Jim Ruddy and came up with the clever idea of him holding a "thin dime" in one hand, while on the table at which he was sitting, there were bundles of dollar bills, some 4,750 in all. This story made the national wire services, and Jim's picture was plastered across America in over 300 newspapers! Jim credited me as the purchaser, as he was bidding for me.

A reporter and a photographer visited me at Penn State and took a picture of me holding the precious 1894-S in the bank vault, where I stored the coin after it arrived by insured registered mail from Jim. This story, too, was distributed by the wire services and appeared in print just about everywhere. At the time I was 19 years old, and the catch line was something to the effect, "Teenager Pays $4,750 for a Dime!" The idea was, of course, that I had more money than good sense, for why would *anybody* want to pay thousands of dollars for a ten-cent piece! Then, and now, the idea of rare coins having immense value is fascinating to the public.



JC Dealer Pays $4,750

For Just One Thin Dime

By JOHN F. MOORE
Binghamton Press Writer

JAMES F. RUDDY, JR., of Johnson City is a coin dealer. Lots of coins arrive in his mail. Yesterday's delivery included an airmail package containing a dime

The dime cost Mr Ruddy $4 750

Rare coins as everyone knows are expensive And as everyone knows who knows Mr Ruddy, he is a young man who wears a hat when it's raining and a topcoat when it's cold, and pays a lot of attention to business

So there obviously are good reasons why a dime should be worth 47 500 times the amount the U. S. Treasury backs it for

To understand the big price tag, it helps to know a few facts about gaudy old San Francisco

Also helpful is a bit of insight into the psychology of great and growing numbers of people who, as coin collectors, "like to finish things."

* * *

PRIOR TO UNPACKING the small, heavily insured package today, Mr Ruddy described how he purchased it last Wednesday in an auction at a New York City coin house

Five other persons vied with him for the purchase Bidding had begun at $4,200 Afterwards, the Johnson City man ordered the coin shipped to avoid traveling with the expensive package

The dime as he proudly showed it off today carries the head of Miss Liberty on its front together with inscriptions, "United States of America," and "1894" The back carries the words "One Dime," surrounded by a wreath, and a tiny "S"

Binghamton Press Photo

THING OF SOME VALUE—A rare dime is examined with warm regard by its new owner, coin dealer James F. Ruddy, Jr., at Workers Trust Office in Johnson City. The $4,750 he paid for coin is greater than the dollar-bill hoard which bank employes stacked on table for comparison.

Feature story about Jim Ruddy in the *Binghamton Press*, November 21, 1957. (Courtesy of Jim Ruddy)

Before I knew it, I had received thousands of letters from dime-owning members of the general public.

"I have an even *older* dime. Mine is an 1893. Send me a check for $4,750 and you can own it."

I even received several letters proposing marriage—after all, a teenager reckless enough to spend $4,750 for a dime might be a good catch!

On the *Today Show*

Seventeen magazine featured me and my dime in the "Teens in the News" column. Before long, I received a call from NBC Television. Would I like to come to New York City as a guest of the *Today Show* and tell about the dime?

I would!

The show producer said that they could not pay me for being on the show, but they would pay my expenses to come to the city and stay there for three days—so I could enjoy myself. A room was reserved for me at the Waldorf Astoria.

On the morning of the show I was at the studio in Rockefeller Center shortly after 6 o'clock. It was still semi-dark outside. The host, David Garroway, greeted me. Never having been on television before, I asked if we were going to rehearse my "performance." In those days, TV was not omnipresent, but was viewed as a relatively new medium of entertainment. Radio shows were still going strong.

"No, we do not rehearse," he said. "Otherwise, when we are on the air you might say something like, 'As I mentioned to you *before* the show,' and we would not be spontaneous."

Two other "teenage business successes" were to appear the same morning. One was a boy who had a business of selling shades or Venetian blinds, if I remember correctly. The other was a girl named Sally Salve, who was from New England. Sally and I had lunch that day, and she told me that she had been born in Estonia, but when it was overrun by the Russians or Nazis—I don't recall which she said—her mother handed her over to a soldier to take her away, so she could have a good life—she must have been about a year or two old. It was a very sentimental, compelling story she told. Eventually she came to America, and on the *Today Show* she told of a business she had set up, in interior decorating I believe.

In 1957 Garroway pretty much reigned over early morning television news programs. Each day he had a mix of guests, news features, and other items. A little chimpanzee named J. Fred Muggs was part of the "cast" and was featured on the show from time to time. Broadcasting was done in black-and-white, and live—as videotaping had not yet been invented, although an image could be preserved by a "Kinescope."

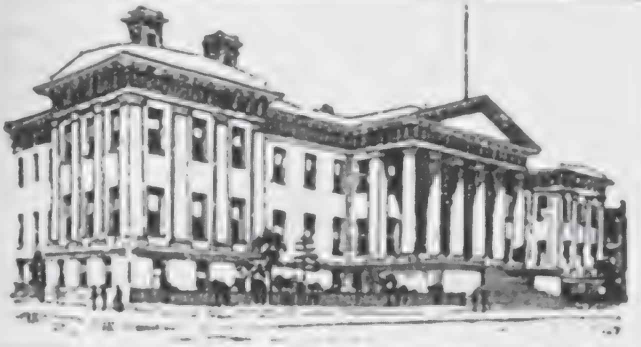
Garroway informed me that I was going to be on for about two or three minutes, and that he was going to ask me, "What makes a dime worth $4,750?" and "Why did I buy it?"

Well, when my air time came up, the next guest after me may have been delayed, or perhaps host Garroway was caught up in the excitement of rare coins and their values. Whatever the reason, he asked me if I would mind staying on camera for an extended interview—and, while I was at it, could I mention to his audience what kind of coins they should look for. The feature ran nearly 15 minutes, after which Garroway said it was one of the longest interviews he had ever had with a single guest.

In 1999 and 2000 I had the occasion to be on the *Today Show* a couple of times in connection with the rare 1804 silver dollar and the gold treasure coins from the *S.S. Central America*. Katy Couric and Matt Lauer were the hosts. In the hall outside the studio are a number of black and white photographs of Dave Garroway and companion J. Fred Muggs. Behind the scenes I was the center of attraction as Lauer and several others asked me my personal impressions of Garroway—whom they knew by reputation and tradition, but had never met in person.

Not too long after my first appearance on the show with Garroway, Ambassador R. Henry Norweb sent me a note asking me if I would sell him the dime, to be included in the family collection which was supervised and mainly gathered by his wife, Emery May Holden Norweb. Mrs. Norweb had befriended me a few years earlier—I felt like a cat looking at a queen, for I was, perhaps, 15 years old and had just begun my coin-dealing career, while she had been involved in rare coins since before 1910, when she helped her father, Albert Fairchild Holden, with his collection. She was, indeed, the *grande dame* of American numismatics in the 1950s, a position she retained for the rest of her life.

My answer was "Yes." The price of $6,000 was agreed upon, and my precious little 1894-S dime went into the Norweb Collection—where it remained for two decades, until, after the death of Hon. and Mrs. R. Henry Norweb, the family consigned it and the rest of the collection to my company to be sold at auction. This time around, the dime sold for $77,000!



The San Francisco Mint, the cornerstone of which was laid in 1870, is where a particularly famous dime was struck in 1894.

Nicknamed the "Granite Lady," the cut-stone structure, roofed with metal and equipped with its own well to furnish a water supply, was the only building in its immediate district to survive the 1906 earthquake and fire. Coinage continued there until new premises were opened on Duboce Street in 1937. (*King's Handbook of the United States*, 1891)

Story of the 1894-S Dime

The 1894-S Barber dime has been the subject of numerous comments, accounts, catalogue descriptions, and articles. Mint records state that only 24 were struck, but no documentation giving particulars as to the circumstances of manufacture or distribution of the pieces has ever surfaced. Thus, the 1894-S has been wreathed in mystery, always a good ingredient for numismatic interest, publicity, and desire for ownership. It is believed that only nine exist today. An authoritative article on this rarity, William A. Burd's "The Inscrutable 1894-S Dime," *The Numismatist*, February 1994, lists the known examples, two of which are well worn. This was a watershed study in the annals of this coin, as previously the population was estimated as being closer to a dozen, perhaps even 13 or 14.

Reasons given for making just 24 1894-S dimes include "balancing the Mint books by clearing a $2.40 item" and "testing the dies." Walter Breen (*Encyclopedia*, 1988, p. 323) suggests that John Daggett, superintendent of the San Francisco Mint, struck the 24 pieces, all Proofs, as a favor for banker friends. Breen went on to comment:

> Each of eight persons received three; Daggett gave his three to his daughter Hallie, telling her to put them away until she was as old as he was, at which time she

> would be able to sell them for a good price. On the way home the child supposedly spent one for a dish of ice cream, but kept the other two until 1954, when she sold them to coin dealer Earl Parker....

The preceding and somewhat enchanting "ice cream story" seems to have been of rather recent origin, and the writer does not recall having heard it decades ago, despite studying 1894-S dimes for many years. As is so often the case in numismatics, the "good story" of one era becomes the *fact* of another.

When Augustus G. Heaton's *Mint Marks* monograph was printed in 1893, the 1894-S dime, of course, was still in the future. In the March 1900 number of *The Numismatist,* Heaton updated the work with an article, "Late Coinage of the United States Mint." in which he noted:

> The San Francisco Mint takes proudly to itself the sensation of later U.S. coinage in striking but $2.40 worth of dimes, or *24 pieces* in all, in the year 1894. Of these, the writer possesses *the only one known* to the numismatic world.

Significantly, nothing was stated about a little girl buying ice cream!

At the very least, this suggests that by very early 1900 Heaton was not aware of any examples in private collections and that someone at the San Francisco Mint was proud of the accomplishment and saw fit to share the details with Heaton. Apparently, the other 23 were held by persons other than collectors. Heaton told no more.

Farran Zerbe, a numismatic whiz-bang who at the turn of the century was just beginning to travel around the United States to visit mints and collectors, claimed to have much information on the 1894-S dime and also the mysterious 1873-S Liberty Seated dollar (no example of which is known today), but if he did, it was not committed to the printed page.

Quietly around the same time, John M. Clapp, a Pennsylvania oil man who also had an office in Washington, D.C., somehow acquired not one, but two specimens. Clapp was a collector of mintmarked coins early in the game and by 1894 was ordering directly from the mints. It would seem that if Superintendent Daggett had a specimen for sale in 1894, it would have been offered to Clapp. Possibly, they had all been paid out by the time Clapp's order arrived.

In his search for high-quality mintmarked coins from the West, J.M. Clapp set up contact with several numismatists in San Francisco including W.K. Cole, cashier of the San Francisco Mint; W.F. Greany; A. Reimers; Sutro & Co.; and John J. Valentine. This was a most impressive "network" for the time, and would be even today, and probably resulted in the pair of 1894-S dimes being acquired promptly after local numismatists knew of them. Unfortunately, the Clapp family records (today preserved by Richard Eliasberg) are silent regarding the source of the two dimes.

Seeking Facts

The true circumstances of the 1894-S dime coinage and distribution may never be known. Facts and strong assumptions include these:

> 1. Government reports indicate that only 24 were struck.
> 2. At least one of these was reserved for the Assay Commission and was sent to Philadelphia for examination by the Commission which convened on Wednesday, February 13, 1895.
> 3. Striking was accomplished between January 1 and June 30, 1894, at a time when it was not known whether dimes would be produced in quantity at the San Francisco Mint that year; thus the 1894-S dime was not recognized as a rarity at the time.
> 4. All were made with Proof finish, apparently at the same time and from a single pair of dies, indicating a special striking rather than mintage for general circulation.
> 5. The existence of the 1894-S dime was not publicized until notice of it appeared in *The Numismatist,* March 1900, and it was not until later that the variety became widely publicized and desired. However, it is likely that the active numismatic community in San Francisco was aware of the issue.
> 6. At the time of striking it was made openly, listed in reports, and a piece was saved for the Assay Commission, indicating that there was no intent to deceive anyone. Apparently, it was an object of pride for the San Francisco Mint.
> 7. Very few people were interested in collecting Barber dimes by mintmark variety in 1894. Thus, no particular notice was taken in the numismatic community at the time as to whether or not 1894-S dimes were made.
> 8. That nine specimens are known today, and that seven of these have Proof surfaces as struck, would seem to indicate that these were made as souvenirs or cabinet pieces. The cute "ice cream story" is also in this vein.

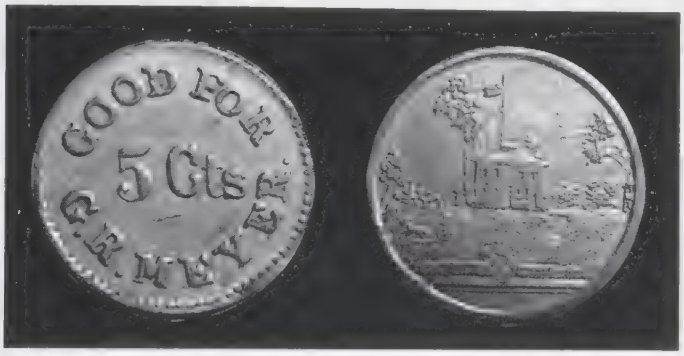
A Place of Honor

Over a period of time the 1894-S became better known and was enshrined in the pantheon of famous American rarities. In recent generations the offering of a specimen in any grade has been an important event.

The 1894-S dimes keep their secrets well, and only in the past few decades have collectors been able to ascertain much information about them. Like the beautiful lady behind the fan, perhaps more will be revealed in the future.

ADVENTURE NO. 6

THE MANSION ON THE HILL



This enigmatic token issued by G.R. Meyer, attributed to Chicago, is GOOD FOR 5 Cts. and is believed to have been issued in the 1860s as part of the Civil War token series. (Fuld IL-150-AN; author's collection)

* * *

A Numismatic Mystery

Sometime, somewhere, someone issued a token depicting on one side a mansion on a hill, described by Dr. George J. Fuld in *Civil War Store Cards,* as a motif "most unusual and attractive." The other side of the token includes the inscription: GOOD FOR / 5 Cts / G.R. MEYER. Although there is no city name or street address, it is usually assigned as a Chicago token.

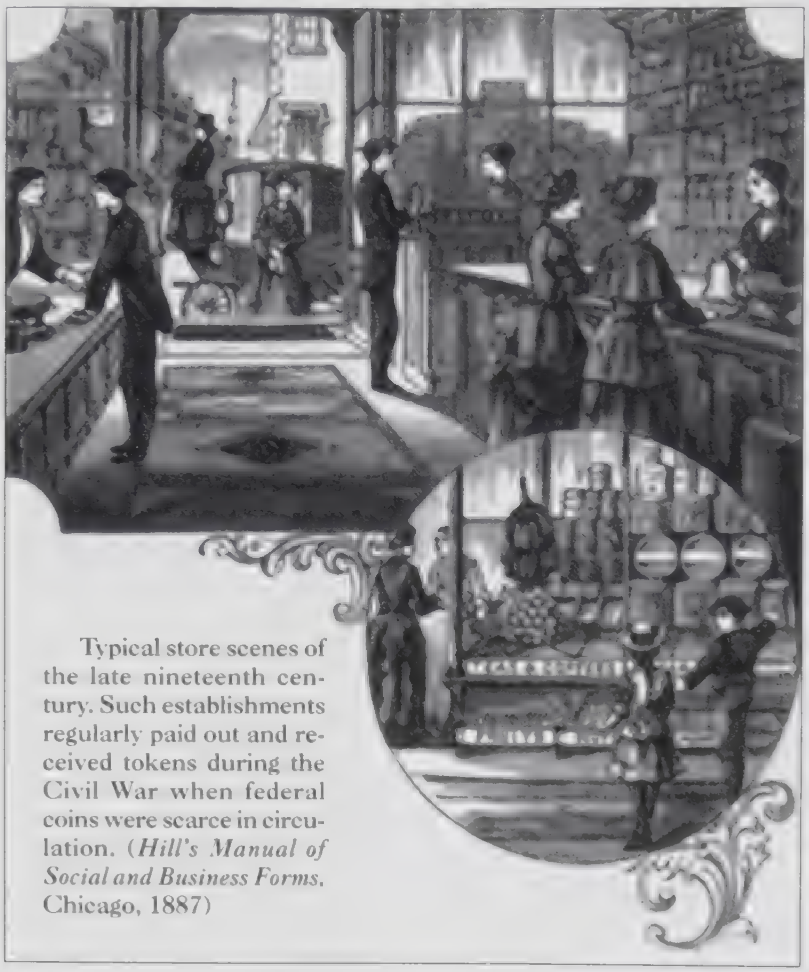
The die cutter, whose identity is likewise unknown today, created one of the most scenic, most detailed dies in the Civil War series. The motif shows a two-story mansion on a slight rise. Surmounting the roof are a widow's walk and flagpole. The front of the house shows four windows above and below. On the ground floor there are two doors, one centered and the other at the right side.

At the left side of the house is a one-story added room with slanting roof, with a tall tree standing in front of it. In the landscaped yard a pony pulls a two-wheeled cart carrying a child(?). A wagon and possibly a dog are on the lawn to the right. In the foreground is a picket fence and a plank sidewalk. At the extreme right can be seen a tiny part of the neighboring house.

Today, this token is very rare, and it is believed that fewer than a half dozen exist. The advertising die with G.R. MEYER inscription seems to have cracked at an early time, perhaps limiting the production of the pieces to only a few hundred—or whatever. By any reckoning, if so few are known today, not many were issued.

In contrast, most other Civil War tokens attributed to the metropolis of Chicago can be documented through directories or early advertisements. In the numismatic annals of such pieces, the city can take credit for the earliest large-scale production of Civil War tokens, with Chicago manufacturer Shubael D. Childs producing many pieces dated 1861 and, presumably, first issued in that year. Cent-size pre-Civil War pieces issued in 1858-9 bearing the common reverse known as Fuld 1368, inscribed BUSINESS CARD within a wreath, are listed in the Fuld Civil War text and are popularly collected along with that series. One of these with reverse 1368 bears the advertisement of Frederick N. DuBois, who may or may not have been the Chicago engraver who cut the dies.

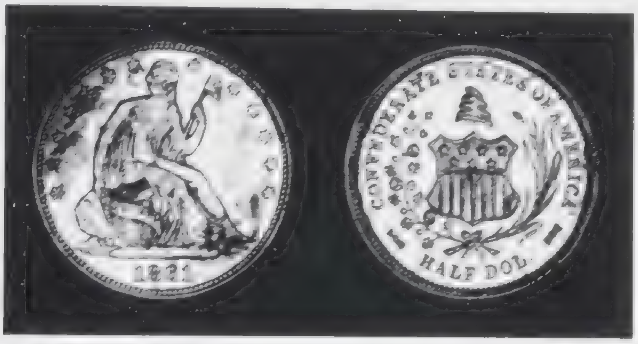
Still other Chicago tokens seem to have been from the hands of others, not now identified. Among the latter is the picturesque token of G.R. Meyer discussed here. During the Civil War, when federal cents disappeared from circulation, their place was taken by a flood of copper (mostly) and brass tokens, many of which were made by Childs.



Typical store scenes of the late nineteenth century. Such establishments regularly paid out and received tokens during the Civil War when federal coins were scarce in circulation. (*Hill's Manual of Social and Business Forms*, Chicago, 1887)

ADVENTURE NO. 7

THE 1861 C.S.A. HALF DOLLAR RESTRIKE



While it would be dandy to have one of the four original 1861 pattern half dollars made at the New Orleans Mint for the Confederate States of America, no such opportunity, numismatic or financial, exists for the majority of collectors. It is perhaps fortunate that a related coin, the restrike made in 1879 by J.W. Scott & Co., is widely available. (Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr. Collection, 1997, Lot 3012)

* * *

Under the Confederate Flag

While I have never handled an *original* 1861 Confederate States of America half dollar, I have been fortunate enough to buy and sell well over a hundred of the interesting restrikes, certainly an "adventure coin" if there ever was one.

The story begins in 1861:

In January 1861, about 5,000 double eagles are said to have been struck at New Orleans along with about 330,000 silver half dollars. During that time Johnson Kelly Duncan was superintendent, for only this month. One later writer theorized that Duncan hid the coins for his own benefit, but died in 1862 without ever recovering them or revealing their location.[1]

Much has been written about what happened to the New Orleans Mint during the early months of 1861, when the Civil War was just beginning. The most reliable accounts are those largely taken from a special report in the *Annual Report of the Director of the Mint* for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1887. Here, this report serves simply as a prelude, for the special 1861 Confederate half dollar is not mentioned:

> The work books of the mint at New Orleans show that a coinage was executed at that institution in 1861 between January 26 and May 31, by the State of Louisiana, after the mint was closed against the United States, amounting to $195,000 in double eagles; and a coinage by the Confederate States of $59,820 in double eagles:—a total gold coinage during the sequestration of the mint of $254,820.

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[1] Tom Hoke, "How the Mint was Robbed," *The Numismatist*, September 1994. Duncan, a graduate of West Point, sympathized with the South and soon joined the Confederate forces. In early 1862 he was commissioned as a brigadier general. With about 500 men and 80 guns under his command at forts Jackson and St. Philip on the lower reaches of the Mississippi River below New Orleans, he challenged David G. Farragut, who was able to sail by. Soon thereafter Duncan was taken as a prisoner of war. He was exchanged for a Union prisoner and later served under Gen. Braxton Bragg in Tennessee. He died in Knoxville on December 18, 1862, a victim of the fever, taking secrets to his grave.

In the second and third months of the same year there was also executed by the State of Louisiana at the United States mint in the city of New Orleans a silver coinage of $620,000 in half dollars; and by the Confederate States in the following months of April and May, $481,316.50:—a total silver coinage of half dollars by the State of Louisiana and the Confederate States of $1,101,316.50, from regular dies of the United States supplied late in 1860 for the following year. For obvious reasons, neither of the coinages executed at the United States mint at New Orleans, while out of the control of the Government, has ever been taken up in statements of the coinage of the United States.

Thirty-two pairs of dies of the date of 1861, more or less complete, and of all denominations of United States coins, were found at the mint by the agent of this bureau in January 1885, and by him destroyed on the 15th of that month.

It is presumed that the larger part, if not the whole, of the gold coin struck, as above described, from United States coinage dies under other than legal auspices, was applied to purchases abroad, and that accordingly it has long since been melted down without ever having appeared in any form in domestic circulation.

The following very interesting statement of the above incidents in the history of the coinage from dies of 1861 is from the pen of Dr. M.F. Bonzano, melter and refiner of the mint at New Orleans during the period in question:

"New Orleans, November 4, 1887.

"Sir: In compliance with the request contained in your letter of the 27th ultimo, to furnish such information as I might have in regard to the coinage at the United States branch mint at New Orleans during its occupation by the State of Louisiana and the Confederate States in the early part of 1861, I beg leave to make the following statement:

"The officers of the United States branch mints at the time of the secession of the State of Louisiana from the Union were: William A. Elmore, superintendent; A.J. Guirot, treasurer and ex-officio assistant treasurer United States; Howard Millspaugh, assayer; B.F. Taylor, coiner; M.F. Bonzano, melter and refiner.

"The branch mint and its contents and all other property of the United States were 'taken in trust' by the secession convention in December 1860, through a committee of the convention, at the head of which was the president of the convention, Ex-Gov. A. Mouton. The committee called at the mint, ascertained the amount of bullion in the hands of the treasurer, melter and refiner, and coiner, and required a special bond for the same from each of these officers. A rough settlement was made and all dies of 1860 defaced in the presence of all the officers (except Mr. Guirot). By order of the superintendent coinage was immediately resumed with the new dies of 1861, when a final settlement was made and all bullion transferred to Mr. A.J. Guirot, who had in the meantime been appointed assistant treasurer of the Confederate States. At the same time all the United States dies, of every description—after careful examination and recognized agreement with the coiner's die account—were, with the consent of the coiner, and in my presence, defaced by the late Mr. John F. Brown, the foreman of the department, with the assistance of a workman, the late Mr. Richard Stevenson.

"Under the auspices of the superintendent, treasurer, and coiner, who probably believed in the possibility of a peaceful secession, designs for a Confederate coin were made, and that of a half dollar die of such high relief as rendered it impractical for use in a coining press. From this die four pieces were struck, by successive blows of a screw-press. These four pieces differed from the United States standard only in the legend. I never saw any of these pieces, nor the die, and only the preliminary sketch of it. My information was derived from Mr. John F. Brown, at the time. With the exception of these four pieces no coins of any kind, differing from the United States standard, were ever made at the New Orleans branch mint during the interval from May 31, 1861, to the early part of 1879.

"On my return to this city, June 7, 1862, after an absence, at the North, of eleven months, I took charge of the mint as special agent of the Treasury Department; found the canceled or defaced dies undisturbed and intact in the coiner's vault and retained them in my custody until the latter part of December, 1878, when I delivered them, as coiner, to my successor, Mr. M.V. Davis, in the same packages as they were on the 31st of May, 1861. Thenceforth my connection with, and knowledge of, these canceled dies ceased.

"I have the honor to be, yours, very respectfully,

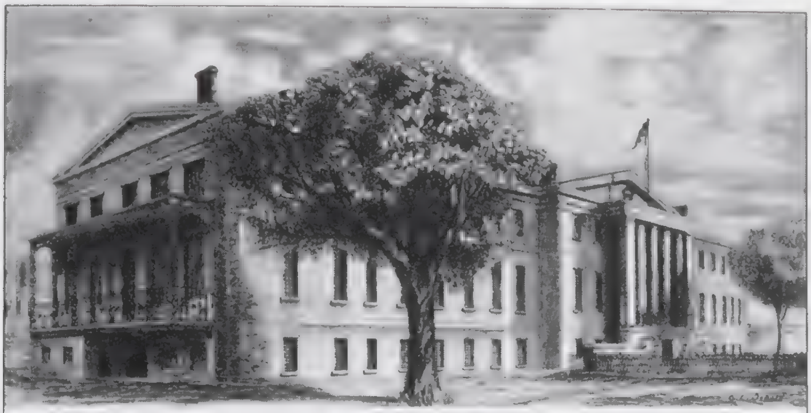
"M.F. Bonzano

"[to:] Hon. Jas. P. Kimball,

"Director of the Mint. Washington, D.C."

More on the Confederate times appeared in an 1895 pamphlet, "History of the Mint," which quoted from records of that institution:

> In 1861 the Mint was abandoned by those in charge, and did not again resume operations under the auspices of the United States government until 1878. Immediately after the abandonment of the Mint by the government authorities, citizens came and went as they chose through the building, taking what tools or instruments they wished.
>
> A tinner of New Orleans, while rambling aimlessly (we hope) about the building, came upon a pile of silver dime planchets, and considering them as no especial value as metal, since no United States stamp was on them, took possession of a handful and threw them loosely about when he reached his tin shop. Afterwards, when a washer was needed for repairing a kettle, pan or other article of cuisine, a hole was punched in one of these silver planchets, and this used as recklessly on cast iron as if it were composed of steel. Some



The New Orleans Mint, opened in 1838, was seized by Confederate forces in 1861. (*Original drawing by George Osborn*)

> of the citizens of New Orleans are probably still polishing, daily, these pieces of precious metal which have such a history....

After being in Confederate hands for only about a year, New Orleans upon its liberation by Union troops under General Benjamin Butler, became a city of intrigue. The commanding general was derisively called "Spoons" Butler, as it was said he filched a lot of silverware belonging to local inhabitants. Whether or not Butler was fair with the inhabitants of the city during his tenure depends upon whether you read Butler's own book on the subject or that of his "pet" biographer, or whether you read the vastly different accounts penned by Southerners (popular history is usually determined by what the *victors* write). In time, Butler's pomposity was brought to the fore by northern historians as well. An analytical article in the *Historical Magazine*, February 1868, p. 69, noted, among other things, that Butler was an "ass and egotist."

Now, to the 1861 Confederate half dollar:

Ebenezer Locke Mason, Jr.

Unknown to historians and others was the Confederacy's effort at creating its own distinctive coinage. This changed in June 1879, when Ebenezer Locke Mason, Jr., in *Mason's Coin Collectors' Herald* Vol. I, published an article, "History of the recently discovered CONFEDERATE SILVER HALF DOLLAR., Struck by C.S.A., at New Orleans Mint. April, 1861."

Mason, who had entered the coin trade in the late 1850s, and who among other activities served as a reconnaissance balloonist for the Union Army in the Civil War, by 1879 was considered by some to be an also-ran in the numismatic profession, almost but not quite landing major collections, almost but not quite making major discoveries, and, often, hoist on his own petard when he roundly criticized the grading, writing, business of his competitors, while he himself made many errors. In particular, he sought the respect and admiration of Philadelphia dealer Edward Cogan, who was busy cataloguing a stream of collections of which Mason could only dream. Cogan considered Mason to be a sniveler from the minor leagues, and said so in print, thus igniting a bitter feud that was played out in the pages of the *American Journal of Numismatics* and elsewhere.

Mason seems to have wanted to have been a "big boy," but never made the grade. *However*, he did leave a rich legacy of magazines and, to a lesser extent, auction catalogues, many of which make interesting reading today. They provide a window on the failings and foibles of dealers and collectors, as Mason tended to accentuate the negative and overlook the positive, in modern metaphor, a "glass half empty" kind of person. Certainly, he would make an interesting study in psychology.

Important to the present "adventure," in June 1879 in *Mason's Numismatic Herald*, the Philadelphia dealer scored a long overdue coup. No one had ever hinted that there was such a thing as an 1861 Confederate half dollar, but here was Mason with the evidence presented for all to contemplate:[1]

> **Discovery Announced**
>
> It has been believed and recorded as an historical fact that the Southern Confederacy had no metallic currency. After a lapse of eighteen years, evidence now presents itself to show that four coins were struck off at the New Orleans Mint while that place was in the possession of the Confederate government. This discovery has been brought about by an article prepared by us for the Philadelphia *Public Record*, and inserted in that paper January 2nd, under the caption of "A Craze For Coins," which gave the fancy prices placed upon rare pieces.
>
> A few days subsequently to the publication, we received a communication from B.F. Taylor, M.D., the Secretary and Treasurer of the Louisiana State Board of Health, giving the information that he had a Confederate coin in his possession. In reply, we wrote for a lead pencil rubbing of the piece, at the same time expressing a doubt as to the existence of any genuine coins of the Confederate States. The return mail brought a rubbing of the coin....
>
> **Coin and Die Sent to Mason**
>
> Early in April, Mr. Taylor sent us the original coin together with the obverse die, requesting us to make pub-

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[1] Subtitles added.

lic the existence of a Confederate Coin, and set at rest the long disputed question concerning the issue of coins by the Confederate States during the civil rebellion.

It was Mr. Taylor's desire that the coin and die should become the property of some historical or numismatic association, but private enterprise far outbid all offers from scientific bodies to possess the coveted prize. Notwithstanding the extraordinary and extensive advertising done to secure a purchaser willing to remunerate the owner for a considerable outlay of money, and visits by the writer to various parts of the country to exhibit the coin and die, and presentation of the most convincing and irrefutable proofs of the genuineness in the shape of documents, affidavits, published "Acts and Resolutions" of the C.S.A., issued during February and March, 1861, at Montgomery, Alabama, yet this *almost* unique coin, and equally interesting (though old and rusty) die from which the coin was struck, were sacrificed for a few hundred dollars to an enterprising coin dealer in New York.

The U.S. Government took a far greater interest than numismatists and historians generally, as the subjoined correspondence taken from the *New Orleans Picayune*, on April 9th, which we think of sufficient interest to reprint, will amply testify to.

Confederate Correspondence

The following correspondence in relation to the history of the Mint in this city while it was under the control of the Confederate States Government will be found interesting:

War Department,
Adjutant General's Office,
Washington, March 27th, 1879.
Dr. B.F. Taylor, New Orleans, La.:

Dear Sir:—The enclosed circulars will explain to you the nature of the duties upon which I am now engaged:

I beg to refer you to my friends, Gen. Beauregard and Hood, and Capt. Pierce of your city, for my service in the Confederate Army. I would like to have from you for file with the Confederate archives a letter stating when and where you were appointed chief coiner of the Confederate States Mint, instructions received, copies of originals of any official papers, sketches, descriptions, etc., of all the coins made, etc. This will make a valuable addition to Confederate history, and I know no one but you can give it.

Very truly, yours,
Marcus Wright.

Chief Coiner Taylor's Reply

New Orleans, La., April 7th, 1879.
To Hon. Marcus J. Wright:

Dear Sir:—Your favor requesting a statement of the history of the New Orleans Mint, in reference to the coinage under the Confederate Government, is received.

That institution was turned over by the State of Louisiana the last of February, 1861, to the Confederate States of America, the old officers being retained and confirmed by the Government, viz: Wm. A. Elmore, Superintendent; A.J. Guirot, Treasurer; M.F. Bonzano, M.D., Melter and Refiner; and Howard Millspaugh, Assayer,

In the month of April orders were issued by Mr. Memminger, Secretary of the Treasurer, to the effect that designs for the half dollar coins should be submitted to him for approval.

Among several sent, the one approved bore on the obverse of the coin a representation of the Goddess of Liberty, surrounded by thirteen stars, denoting the thirteen States from whence the Confederacy sprung, and on the lower rim the figures 1861.

On the reverse there is a shield with seven stars, representing the seceding States; above the shield is a liberty cap, and entwined around it stalks of sugar cane and cotton. The inscription is, "Confederate States of America." The dies were engraved by A.H.M. Peterson [Patterson], engraver and die striker, who is now living in Commercial Place. They were prepared for the coining press by Conrad Schmidt, foreman of the coining room, (who is still living,) from which four pieces only were struck.

About this period an order came from the Secretary suspending operations on account of the difficulty of obtaining bullion, and the Mint was closed April 30th, 1861.

Of the four pieces mentioned one was sent to the Government, one presented to Prof. Biddle, of the University of Louisiana, one to Dr. E. Ames, of New Orleans, the remaining one being retained by myself. Upon diligent inquiry I am able to find but one piece besides my own, that being in the possession of a Confederate officer of this city, who transmits it to his son as a souvenir of his father's services in the Confederate cause.

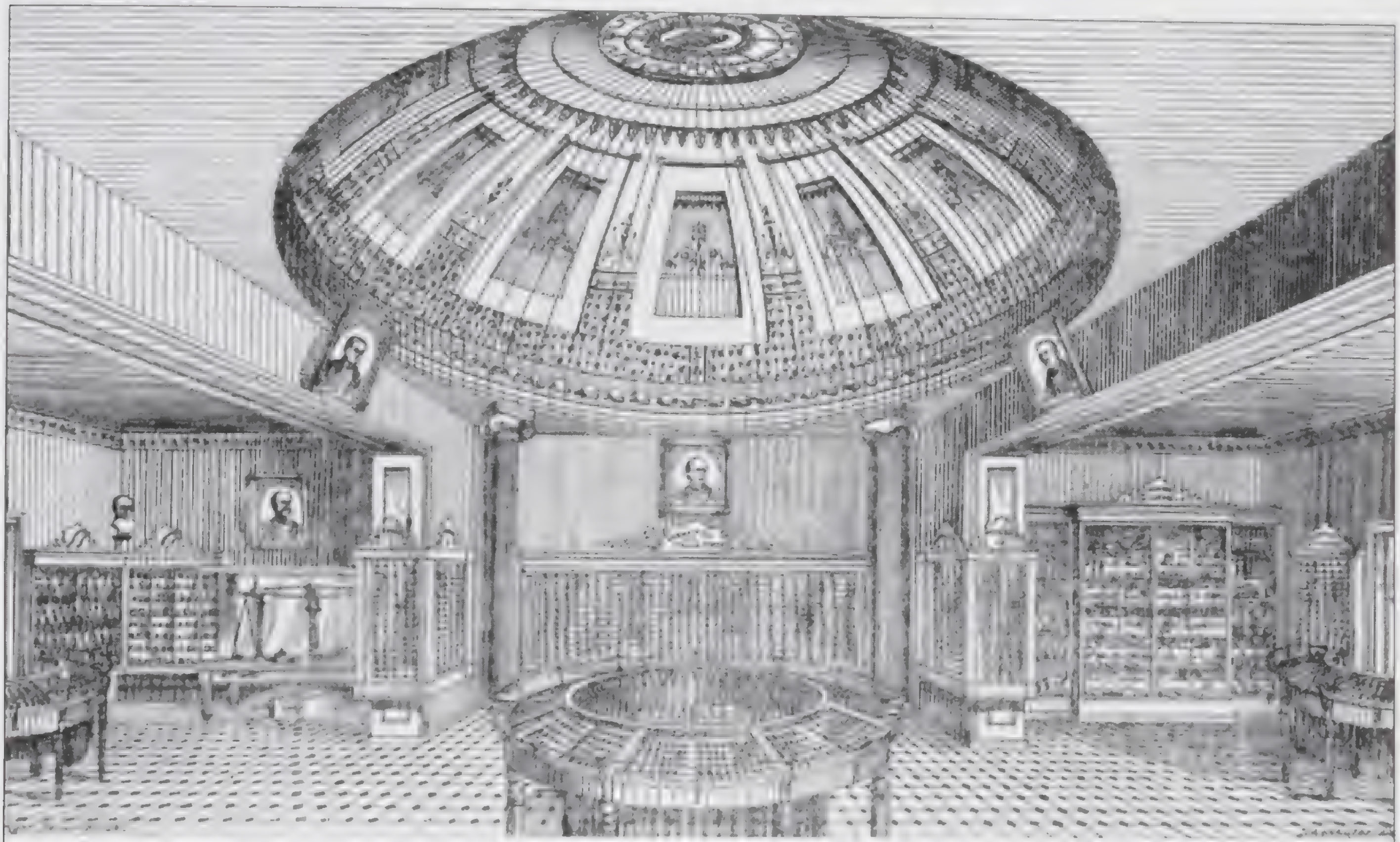
So soon as copies are made I will take pleasure in sending you a specimen for the archives you represent.

Very respectfully, your obedient service,
B.F. Taylor, M.D.
Formerly Chief Coiner C.S.A.

Mason's Offer to the Society

On May 20, 1879, a letter from Mason was read to the assembled members of the American Numismatic and Archaeological Society, New York, "offering to dispose of a Confederate silver half dollar; also the reverse die for the same."

The incident was later related in the *American Journal of Numismatics,* with the editor's pointed comment that:



The Mint Cabinet as it appeared in the early 1880s. The *American Journal of Numismatics* suggested that Mason's prized 1861 Confederate half dollar be placed in the Cabinet, but the owner had other plans. At the time the Cabinet, located within the Philadelphia Mint, was a popular drawing card for numismatists and tourists alike. On view were thousands of coins and several hundred mineral specimens. (*Visitors Guide and History of the U.S. Mint, Philadelphia*, A.M. Smith, 1885)

> this piece [the half dollar owned by Mason], having been struck in the New Orleans Mint by government officers, with government tools, and on silver stolen from the United States, should be restored to its true ownership, and that it be placed in the Mint Cabinet. The obverse die, we hear, was claimed by the government; why not the reverse also?[1]

Mason's Continuing Narrative

In the same June 1879 issue of *Mason's Numismatic Herald* that gave the story of the newly revealed coin, Ebenezer Locke Mason, Jr., used the 1861 Confederate half dollar coup as a springboard to launch a series, "Numismatic Excursions," of which this was "No. 1":[2]

An Editor's Travels

> Sometimes the busy editor of a newspaper indulges in a little recreation, previous to which he washes his hands, puts on a clean shirt, packs a little 8 x 10 valise, with nickel-plated brass heads as big as half dollars, and with a "dead-head" ticket tucked among his small change in a nickel-plated *porte-monaie* entirely out of proportion to contents, slips quietly off to enjoy a needed *rest*.
>
> We say *sometimes*, rarely often, and when he returns refreshed with the bloom of youth reappearing on his cheeks, or possibly on a more prominent physiological appendage, he feels like a new man, imbued with new ideas, and has the spirit of a philosopher and philanthropist, determined to give his readers an extra entertainment in the shape of "travels," "personalities," "anecdotes," etc.
>
> With a somewhat similar feeling, the editor hereof, left his comfortable sanctum one early morning last week, *via* the Bound Brook Railroad, with a *full paid* ticket for Boston, taking with him the recently unearthed Confederate half dollar and a number of rare coins for exhibition, sale or exchange.

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[1] *American Journal of Numismatics*, October 1879.

[2] Subtitles added.

In New York City and Boston

Stopping in New York for the purpose of visiting the sale of Michael Moore's coin cabinet, at Bangs Auction House, Broadway, where he exhibited the interesting Confederate coin to Cogan, Nichols, Chapman, Sampson, Deffendorf, and other prominent numismatists;[1] made a hasty examination of the beautiful coins spread out in glittering array on the long tables like an enticing feast to tempt the palate of the on lookers, and paid a pop visit to several dealers, (Brown, Scott & Co., Sampson, *et. al.*,) left New York by steamer *via* Fall River, on Friday, May 2d., for Boston, and made tracks for Cambridge, where our Confederate States of America Half Dollar created a sensation.

Returned to Boston, and called at rooms of N.E. Historical Society to show our treasures; then around the city, calling here and there, buying, selling, and exchanging coins, and finally dropped into Ahlborn's Coin Store, Exchange St. Found Henry I., busy as a bee, storing away his numismatic honey in the shape of rare silver coins. Left Henry I., passed by Henry II's., coin and cobblers establishment,[2] and dropped down upon the King of all modern collectors, L.G. Parmelee; whose extraordinary and beautiful series of American coins made our heart ache with envy. Row after row of uncirculated cents, dollars, etc., and colonials beyond our ability to describe, without losing our self-possession and calling all the coins *diamonds of the first water*.

From Parmelee's Palatial Palace, (erected on Boston's nutritious edibles, "B.B." & "B.B.") we hailed a Washington Street car, and soon passed on to the famous "Highlands," (which our old, but still young looking friend, W. [Woodward] has beautified and embellished at a sacrifice of thousands of ducats,) and soon entered a delightfully arranged apothecary's shop, where we met W. Elliott Woodward, the proprietor, and veteran dealer in American numismatic literature; he who "gobbled up" Mickley's magnificent cabinet of coins, etc., and he, who has had the temerity to "gobble up" many other cabinets, and whose multifarious sales of American imprints and coins has placed his name high up on the bibliographic and numismatic temple of fame.[3]

A Steamship Trip with Woodward

After a pleasant conversation and interchange of views concerning the coin trade, etc., and an invitation to share a luxurious state room on a passage to New York (which offer was accepted) we jumped into a return car, and to be *frank*, confess to having a good, clever, sociable companion—a chip off the old block, (Frank Woodward)—who parted with us on Tremont Street.

After visiting several dealers and collectors, and getting some bids for rare coins, collecting a few advertisements and subscribers for the *Herald*, we started for the Old Colony Depot, and joined W.E.W. for a little excursion to New York, Brooklyn, etc., It is needless to say we occupied the whole night, while on the steamer, discussing coins, etc., and to our surprise, were entering New York Harbor before obtaining a wink of sleep.

On arrival in New York, we took quarters at a hotel for the day, wishing to pay our devotions in a becoming manner conductive to health and morality, and entered a comfortable ch—, we must confess it?—a comfortable *chamber*, and slept in blissful ignorance of church service throughout the entire day!

On Monday we paid a friendly visit to numerous collectors, stopped in Brown's coin and stamp dealing establishment, Nassau Street, examined a beautiful 1836 proof silver dollar ("Gobrecht" in the field) a unique gold N.E. sixpence,[4] and other rare pieces; skipped over to Scott & Co.'s., Coin and Stamp Emporium in Fulton St., sold to the latter firm our Confederate Silver half dollar of 1861, and many other beautiful coins, made some purchases, bagged a number of advertisers and subscribers, and penned a number of notes for future reference and elaboration, leaving New York for this city, where we arrived in time to take an early train, on Tuesday, for Reading, Pa., where we purchased a rare lot of silver and copper coins of Miller, and returned home in time to insert this hastily written and imperfect sketch of an editor's excursion.

Mason's travelogue omitted his unsuccessful overture to sell the Confederate coin and die to the American Numismatic and Archaeological Society.

Scott and the Restrikes

No sooner had J.W. Scott obtained the original Confederate States of America reverse half dollar die than he decided to make 500 restrikes. The inspiration came, no doubt, from what seems to have been a successful operation done by John W. Haseltine, J. Colvin Randall, and Peter Krider for the Confederate cent restrikes in 1874, when the original dies (both dies in this instance) for the 1861 Confederate cent were used. The cent restrikers declared that on the 55th copper restrike, the dies broke, thus making further impressions impossible.

Scott in 1879 desired to make restrikes of the half dollar, but to be sure that he had at least 500 of *something* to give subscribers to the restrikes in case the

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[1] Rather bad form we might say today, to go to a competitor's numismatic event and distract many prospective bidders with one's own merchandise!

[2] "Henry I" was Henry Ahlborn, whose main business was issuing coin premium catalogues to the public. "Henry II" was the highly respected Henry Cook, who had been in the coin business since at least the mid-1850s (antedating Mason), and who conducted a shoe shop along with his coin business. Mason made many sneering comments about Cook over the years.

[3] W. Elliot Woodward also collected and sold rare books, numismatic literature, and other publications and was probably the first American professional numismatist to make this a strong specialty.

[4] A nineteenth-century fabrication.

C.S.A. die broke, he had 500 tokens made in soft white metal, with an advertising inscription for Scott on the obverse and the impression of the Confederate die on the reverse.

After this was done, he took 500 specimens of 1861-O (he stated they were New Orleans Mint coins, but it is not known if all actually were) half dollars found in contemporary circulation, "drilled" off the reverse design, put each coin face-down on a pad, affixed it in a smooth-edge collar, and stamped the now-plain reverse with the original Confederate die. The resultant coins show a flattened obverse and flattened edges (the reeding was flattened, but is still visible). As the host coins were worn to begin with, having been extracted from circulation, grading of the 1861 Confederate restrike is by the reverse only.

Although Scott soon advertised that he was oversubscribed, sold out, etc., in fact he had sold only a portion of the 500 restrikes made. David U. Proskey, who worked with Scott, stated decades later that Scott had unsold pieces on hand for many years after 1879. However, by the early twentieth century, most found buyers, and from that point onward the demand for them and their price increased.

In *The Numismatist*, March 1905, Henry Clay Ezekiel, a Cincinnati collector, contributed an article, "The Confederate Half Dollar of 1861," which listed sale records for numerous specimens of the restrikes made by J.W. Scott in 1879, as well as several sales of original and restrike 1861 Confederate States of America one-cent pieces. In the same publication in August 1906, Farran Zerbe told of a visit to J.W. Scott in New York City. Upon being asked for details of the restriking of the 1879 Confederate half dollar, J.W. Scott disclaimed any memory relating to the event, except that he recalled the original die was defaced, but did not remember what happened to it.

In time, the original half dollar owned by Mason and then Scott became the property of J. Sanford Saltus who gave the coin and reverse die to the American Numismatic Society, New York. Not long thereafter he became the *late* Mr. Saltus, who literally gave up his life while cleaning coins.[1]

In 1982 the writer catalogued and sold the numismatic collection of the New York Public Library.[2] Included were two remarkable restrikes—pieces that had *not* had the reverse of the undertype 1861-O half dollar drilled off, and which still showed the outline of the lettering and eagle's wings. A little tag noted that these had been presented to the Library by Scott, and it can be assumed that these may have been the first pieces struck—before everything was in place to remove the reverse design before using the pieces as planchets.

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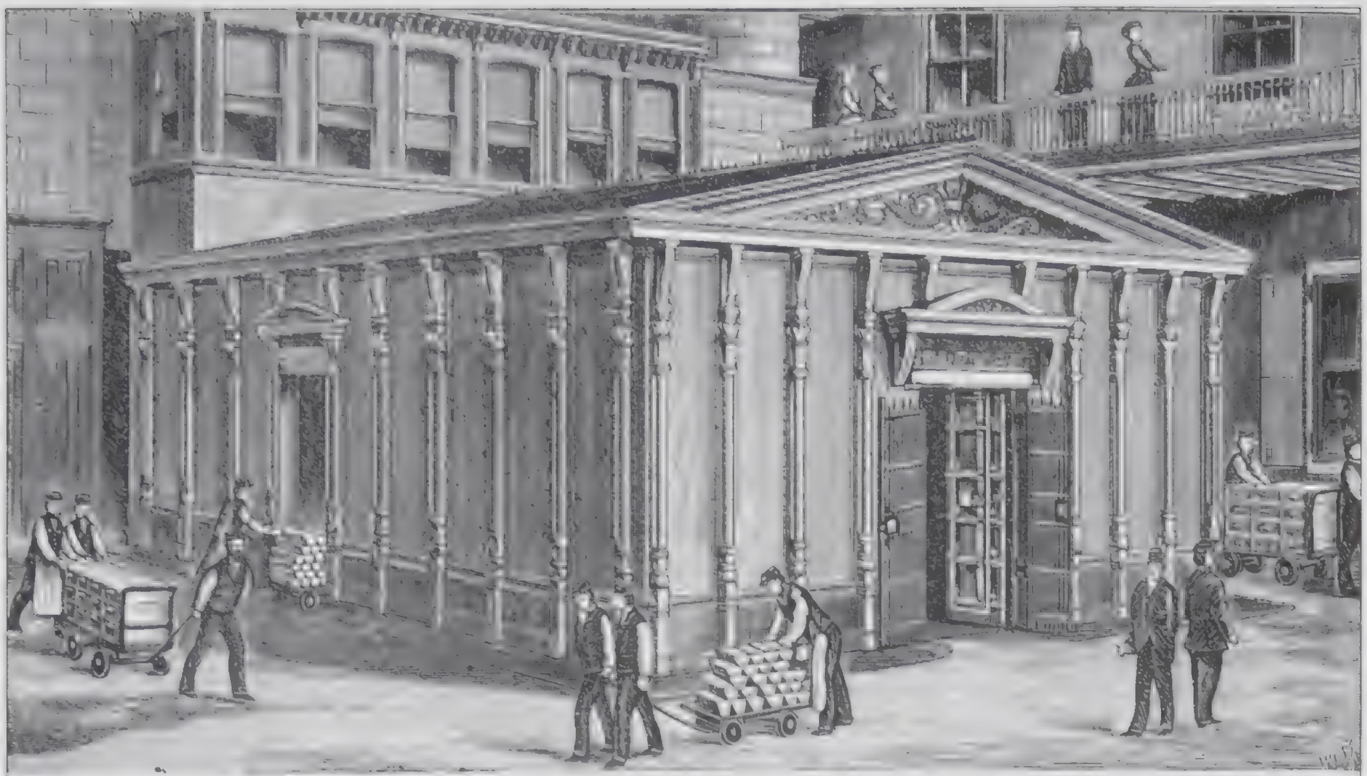
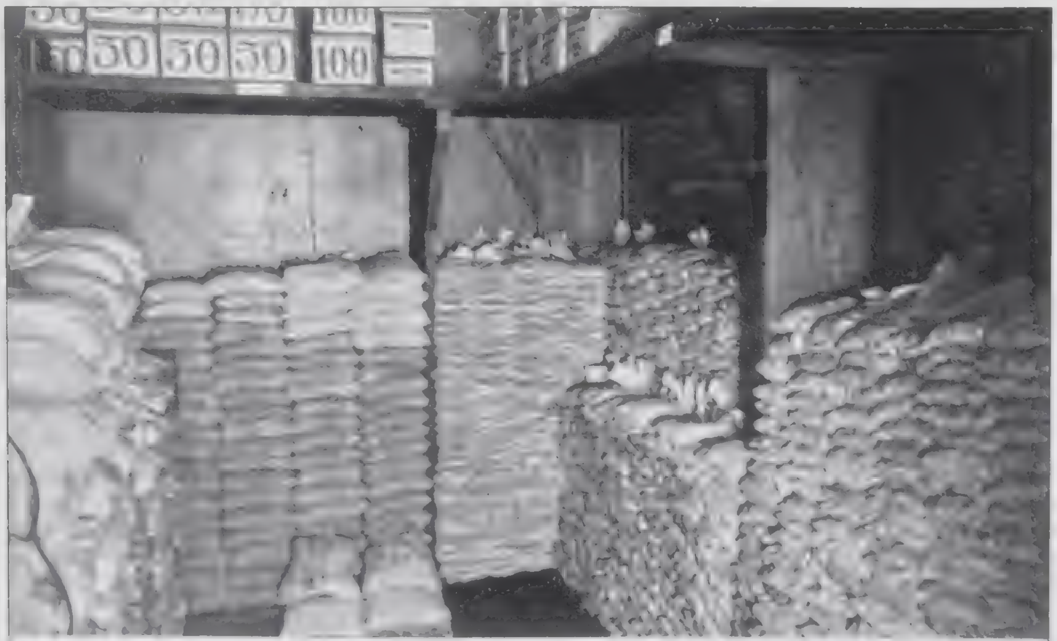
[1] Among the obituaries in the August 1921 issue of *The Numismatist* was this: "J. Sanford Saltus, an international figure in the numismatic world, died suddenly at the Hotel Metropole, in London, on June 24. Apparently in the best of health up to the time his body was found in his room, the manner of his death was for a time a mystery until an official investigation revealed that it was due to accidental poisoning. His body was discovered lying on the floor, fully dressed, by one of the hotel maids, and it is believed that death occurred several hours before it became known. A verdict of 'death by misadventure' was rendered by the coroner's jury. The evidence at the inquest disclosed the fact that on the day before his death he had purchased a small quantity of potassium cyanide for the purpose of cleaning some recent purchases of coins and retired to his room. Shortly afterward he ordered a bottle of ginger ale. A glass containing the poison and a glass containing the ginger ale were found side by side on the dressing table, and it is believed that while interested in cleaning the coins he took a drink of the poison in mistake for the ginger ale. Potassium cyanide, although one of the most deadly poisons, is frequently used by collectors in cleaning coins, as it will have the desired effect when other methods fail...." • The American Numismatic Society presents an award annually in his honor as a benefactor to the Society with, as might be expected, never a comment about how Saltus passed from this earthly sphere.

[2] Dr. George J. Fuld, on our staff at the time, was also essential in the cataloguing process. • Information relating to the New York Public Library and its importance to numismatics can be found in *American Numismatics Before the Civil War, 1760-1860*.



This huge steel vault was set up in the courtyard of the Philadelphia Mint to store the burgeoning supply of silver and silver dollars purchased under the Bland-Allison Act of February 28, 1878. During the next several decades the government accumulated hundreds of millions of unwanted, unneeded silver dollars—many of which remained in storage until the 1960s. (*Illustrated History of the United States Mint*, published by George G. Evans, 1892 and other editions)



Bags of $1,000 face value of silver dollars stored in the Treasury Department, Washington, DC, in 1904. In the foreground are bags marked "LAFAYETTE," which contained commemorative silver dollars. As only 50,000 Lafayette dollars were coined, and this picture shows several hundred bags, most of the others must be of the Morgan type (if any were dated 1903-O we cannot tell).

ADVENTURE NO. 8

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE 1903-O SILVER DOLLAR

Great Rarity of Yesteryear

Before the curious happenings of October 1962, the 1903 New Orleans Mint silver dollar was considered the most difficult of all 1878-1921 era silver dollars to locate in high grade. Only a handful of Mint State coins were known. Then something happened.

* * *

Minting the 1903-O Dollars

In 1903 at the New Orleans Mint, 4,450,000 million circulation strike silver dollars were minted. Not needed in circulation at the time, most of the coins were placed in storage. Silver dollars were a glut in American commerce, and even the Treasury Department did not know what to do with all of them. The Bland-Allison Act of February 28, 1878, the Sherman Silver Purchase Act of 1890, and other boondoggle pieces of legislation were enacted to make Uncle Sam the buyer for millions of ounces of silver mined in the West.

It was determined that the easiest way to store all of this silver was to mint it into the largest denomination of that metal, the silver dollar. From March 1878 onward, *hundreds of millions* of silver dollars were struck, using a design by George T. Morgan (hence the "Morgan dollar"). Millions were placed into circulation, but hundreds of millions of others were stored in vaults set up by the Treasury, including in the interior courtyard of the Philadelphia Mint, at other mints, at the Treasury Building next to the White House in Washington, and in government Post Office buildings.

Thus, when 4,450,000 1903-O dollars were minted, there was no need for them in commerce. Some were paid out, as asked for, but the vast majority were tossed into a vault at the New Orleans Mint.

Numismatic Interest Begins

Numismatic interest in Morgan dollars by date and mintmark varieties was almost nil, and probably not more than a dozen or more aspired to acquire "new" pieces as they were struck each year. One of these collectors was John M. Clapp, who sent a remittance to the New Orleans Mint for one each of the current silver and gold coins being struck, and received a 1903-O silver dollar by mail in October of that year.[1]

In 1918 the Pittman Act provided for the eventual melting of 270,232,722 silver dollars of earlier dates, probably including most of the 1903-O mintage. In 1929, at least a few hundred bags each containing 1,000

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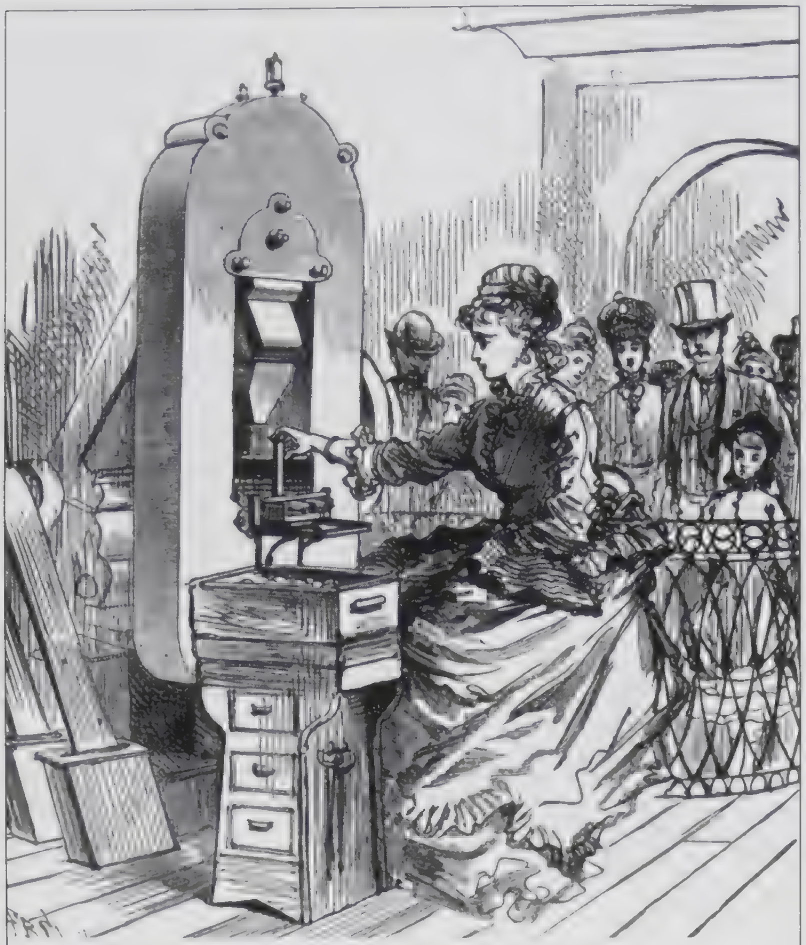
[1] As noted under Adventure No. 5, Clapp was the owner of two specimens of the rare 1894-S Barber dime.



A coining press in operation in the late nineteenth century. Visitors to the Mint watch from behind an iron railing. The lady attendant drops planchets into a vertical brass tube, from the bottom of which they are automatically fed into the press. Morgan silver dollars were struck in this manner. (*Illustrated History of the United States Mint*, published by George G. Evans, 1892)

1903-O dollars were transferred to storage at the Philadelphia Mint, as use of the New Orleans Mint building was discontinued. Thousands of bags of other New Orleans dollars were shipped as well.

Every so often it was Treasury practice to take inventory of its silver dollars, especially when political administrations changed and the Treasury Department came under the aegis of a new director. This was done in various ways, including by manually counting stored bags and sampling some of them. However at the Philadelphia Mint, the dollars from New Orleans were placed in a sealed vault, thus securing its count and removing the necessity for re-examination.

In the meantime, a few dedicated collectors sought to acquire one each of the nearly 100 different major varieties of 1878-1921 Morgan dollar dates and mintmarks. The number of such enthusiasts is not known today, but it was probably no more than a few dozen. Most who were interested in Morgan dollars were content to get just one of each *date,* never mind the mintmark, and Proofs filled the bill.

Newcomb's Observation

An early appreciation of the 1903-O was printed in *The Numismatist,* July 1925, in this note by Howard R. Newcomb, a Detroit collector who was an avid student of silver coins by mintmark varieties:

> There seems to be something peculiar about the standard silver dollar of 1903 issued from the New Orleans Mint. Although the government records indicate a coinage of 4,450,000 pieces, I failed to locate, in the last half dozen years, any specimens either in the hands of dealers or collectors, save one in my own collection and one in a prominent collection in Washington, D.C.[1] They seem to be equally scarce even in circulation.
>
> Although silver dollars were not plentiful in circulation in these parts, I have enlisted the aid of the head cashiers in three of our larger stores to be on the lookout for this piece. It is customary in these stores when silver dollars are received not to give them out again in making change, but to deposit all of them. These men, for several years, have looked over thousands of silver dollars and not one has come to light. Two of our A.N.A. members, one in Los Angeles, the other in San Francisco, have also searched where the silver dollar is plentiful and they, too, have been unable to find any. The only explanation I can offer is that the government, during the late war, sold the entire mintage as bullion and the entire mintage rested in the government vault, undisturbed, until that time when so many millions of silver dollars were melted up.

Apropos of Newcomb's comment, the editor of *The Numismatist,* Frank Duffield said:

> Silver dollars are not collected extensively, but if they were, it is more than probable that other dates and mintmarks would be found to be far rarer than the recorded coinage would indicate.

Thresher's Quest

The same issue of *The Numismatist,* July 1925, also included an article by E.S. Thresher, "Coins That Can Be Found in Circulation," of which excerpts are given below.

> On June 1919 I started an experiment to see how long it would take to find every date and mintmark

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[1] No doubt John H. Clapp, son and numismatic heir to John M. Clapp. The Clapp Collection was later acquired *en bloc* by Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr., in 1942.

> of the coins of type now in circulation, that is, silver dollars since 1878, half dollars, quarter dollars, and dimes since 1892, nickels since 1883, and cents since 1864.
>
> I put every date and mintmark on a card which I carried in my pocket, whenever I found one I checked it off. Not being in a business where cash is handled, I had to depend on such coins as I would get for pocket money, except cents. For these I had access to the collections of about 200 "penny-in-the-slot" machines.

Thresher lived in Kansas City. He noted that these were the dates and mintmarks of silver dollars that he had not yet found:

> 1878-S silver dollar with 8 tail feathers.
> 1884-CC
> 1885-CC
> 1889-S
> 1892
> 1893-S
> 1894
> 1897
> 1899
> 1923-D (Peace)
> 1925-D
> 1925-S.

Thresher noted that he had found an 1895 dollar, a coin of which 880 Proofs were struck, but which to this day no Mint State piece has been confirmed. Perhaps Thresher's 1895 was a spent Proof. The Thresher listing is extremely valuable for research today, as it shows which dates of Morgan (and a few Peace) dollars were not in widespread circulation at the time. I wish that more accounts of this type were available, as they would help numismatists figure out the circulation patterns of certain issues.

Regarding the 1903-O, Thresher had better luck than Newcomb did, for this rarity was not on his 1925 "want list."

Neil's Reply to Thresher

In the September 1926 number of *The Numismatist*, Will W. Neil, a druggist in Baldwin, Kansas, in a letter to the editor dated July 23, 1926, noted that he had been looking through coins for eight years in connection with his business:

> Of the silver dollars from 1878 to 1904 I found one complete set, all dates and mints, and several varieties....
>
> I then started a second set and have it complete with the lone exception of 1903-O, which is a tough fellow to find. I suppose I have looked over 5 million silver dollars to find the ones I have. I have found most of the other pieces that he [Thresher] could not locate, with the exception of the two rarities [probably the 1895 and 1903-O].

Imagine that—looking through five million silver dollars and finding only a single 1903-O! Amazing!

A Rarity Is Recognized

The years slipped by, and in the 1930s the collecting of rare coins became a nationwide passion. Although America was in the depths of the Great Depression, there was a boom in hobbies as a diversion from everyday cares. Jigsaw puzzles became a fad, and thousands of shops and departments were set up to sell or even rent these. Miniature golf was the outdoor game of the day, and courses were built just about everywhere.

In New York City, Wayte Raymond, a coin dealer associated with the Scott Stamp & Coin Co., made an arrangement with M.L. Beistle, of Shippensburg, Pennsylvania, a manufacturer of cardboard products. Beistle, a numismatist, was particularly interested in early American half dollars and wrote an excellent book about them. Important to the present narrative, he also devised cardboard album pages with clear cellulose acetate slides which permitted coins to be stored and displayed in orderly rows and viewed from either side.

Marketed by Raymond under the "National" name, these album pages were made in two sizes and could be fitted into leatherette notebooks. Now, for the first time, a coin collection could be stored and displayed at the same time, while an empty hole signaled "I gotta get one!"

Within the space of a few years, the National albums achieved wide distribution. Now, attention was paid to the empty holes, and rare dates and mintmarks became highly desired. Before long, every school kid seemed to know that a 1909 Lincoln cent with a tiny "S" mintmark below the date, and the initials V.D.B. (for designer Victor D. Brenner) on the reverse, the 1909-S V.D.B. cent as is was called, was *rare*, and, by gosh, was worth several dollars—*if you could find one!*

Similarly, among Liberty Head nickels, the 1885 was scarce and worth a premium. Down in Fort Worth, Texas, dealer B. Max Mehl had his own radio program about rare coins and offered $50, later increased to $500, reward for anyone finding a super-rare *1913* Liberty Head nickel.

In the meantime, in 1934, Wayte Raymond launched *The Standard Catalogue of U.S. Coins*, which became the only regularly-issued guide to coin values. Mintages and historical information were also given. As if this were not enough, in the autumn of 1935 a great boom market developed in commemorative half dollars—as new issues were eagerly sought and in some instances multiplied in value almost overnight.

In this milieu, the number of numismatists seeking 1878-1921 Morgan silver dollars by date and mint increased to hundreds, if not several thousand. It was soon learned that while most of the more than 95 major varieties could be obtained without undue effort, there were a few "stoppers," and prime among these was the 1903-O. Occasionally a well-worn one would be encountered, but a Mint State example—forget it! Most dealers had never even *seen* one!

By any accounting, the most prominent rare coin dealer of the first half of the twentieth century was the aforementioned Mehl. From his ground-floor office on Magnolia Street in Fort Worth, he bought and sold a generous share of major rarities and collections. In June 1941 his sale of the William Forrester Dunham Collection was the brightest feather on his numismatic cap. This incredible cabinet had nearly one of everything, including an 1804 silver dollar and an 1822 $5 gold half eagle. It also had an Uncirculated 1903-O dollar, special notice of which was taken concerning its rarity. The listing was as follows:

> 1903-O Unc., sharp, with full original mint lustre. Just as perfect as the day it was minted. Excessively rare so choice. Listed at $35 and worth a great deal more in this remarkable condition.

To the modern reader the listing of a 1903-O dollar for $35 may not seem exciting. However, in 1941 it was exceedingly important. For comparison, here is what Mehl said about the 1895 dollar in the same Dunham catalogue, the 1895 being worth tens of thousands of dollars today!:

> 1895 Perfect brilliant Proof. Rare. Very limited number of Proofs struck. Listed at $6.

One success followed another with Mehl, and in March 1948 he offered the Dr. Christian A. Allenburger Collection in a catalogue that has not been well remembered since then, but which, upon close examination yields some of the most incredible early (pre-1858) *Proof* coins ever to be presented at public sale. Among other items in the Allenburger sale was this Morgan silver dollar:

> 1903-O Uncirculated. An even beautiful lustrous mint surface. Extremely rare in any condition, but especially so choice. A similar specimen in my sale of the Roe Collection, three years ago, brought $115. Probably not more than four or five known in this remarkably choice condition.

October 1962

Years slipped by, coin collecting became increasingly popular, and by October 1962 tens of thousands of numismatists collected silver dollars by dates and mintmarks. The standard arbiter of coin values was *A Guide Book of United States Coins*, which had been issued annually since 1946. In the *Guide Book* in 1962 the 1903-O silver dollar in Uncirculated condition listed at $1,500.

For perspective I mention that at the same time in the coin market a typical Liberty Seated dime in Uncirculated condition catalogued for about $12, an Uncirculated 1796 quarter could be bought for $2,750, and a Mint State Capped Bust half dollar of the 1820s merited a valuation of $16.

The 1903-O Morgan silver dollar was a legendary rarity in Mint State. Few dealers had seen an example, and fewer still had actually owned one. The situation hadn't changed much.

In October 1962 the numismatic world was shocked by the news that a few Mint State 1903-O dollars had come to light. Telephone calls were made, dealers had conferences with each other, and it was concluded that *some* had trickled out of the Federal Reserve holdings, along with examples of 1898-O and 1904-O, issues also considered to be rarities. Within a week or two, the "few" coins of these three New Orleans Mint issues expanded to *several million.*

A treasure trove beckoned. Not often in life does anyone have the chance to buy coins listed at $1,500 in the *Guide Book* for face value! Banks, the Federal Reserve outlets, and others holding dollars were besieged with buyers. As the Treasury dug deeper and deeper into the vaults, more and more silver dollars of various early dates were found. Values plummeted.

It is said that the small town of Alma, Michigan was the site of some of the first 1903-O dollar discoveries. The race was on, and the silver dollar market would never be the same again. The news spread that the 1903-O and other New Orleans silver dollars had been shipped to the Philadelphia Mint in 1929, and had remained in a joint-sealed vault since that time. A generation of distinguished Philadelphia numismatists came and went, without knowledge of their existence in their very backyard! Additional coins came out from hiding in the Treasury Building in Washington, D.C., where, for some unexplained reason, they had not been noticed by coin-wise employees earlier.

Reminiscing in *The Comprehensive Silver Dollar Encyclopedia*, dealer Dean Tavenner said that in Helena, Montana, a banker had 1903-O dollars available in quantity by February 1963. The least Dean Tavenner remembers paying for an Uncirculated piece was $7 each, probably in the summer of 1963. He recalled that by November 1975 he sold five rolls for a banker from Dillon, Montana for $2,100—which amounted to $21 per coin.

Writing in an advertisement in *The Numismatist* in January 1964, Steve Ruddel told of an unspecified Kansas City dealer who "panicked…when he got a bag of '03-Os. He soon flooded his local market and got $3 or $4 each. At the same time I had a standing offer of $15,000 a bag and couldn't buy any."

I was first told about the release of 1903-O (and 1898-O and 1904-O) dollars by Philadelphia dealer Harry J. Forman, who telephoned dealers and collectors around the country to alert them to the situation and also to warn them against deception. It seems that a few clever insiders obtained coins of these three formerly-rare dates, and hurried to dealers' stores to sell them for cash—at prices based upon the old catalogue listings. One such insider flew to London, where he endeavored to steal a march on B.A. Seaby, Ltd., A.H. Baldwin, and Spink & Son, Ltd., the three leading British rare coin dealers at the time. After the news broke, I was offered a few bags for $17,000 each in late 1962 or early 1963 by a Detroit source, but I declined, as I was fearful that about four million more coins would be coming out of the Treasury; I was wrong on the four million, but time would have vindicated a purchase at $17,000 per bag.

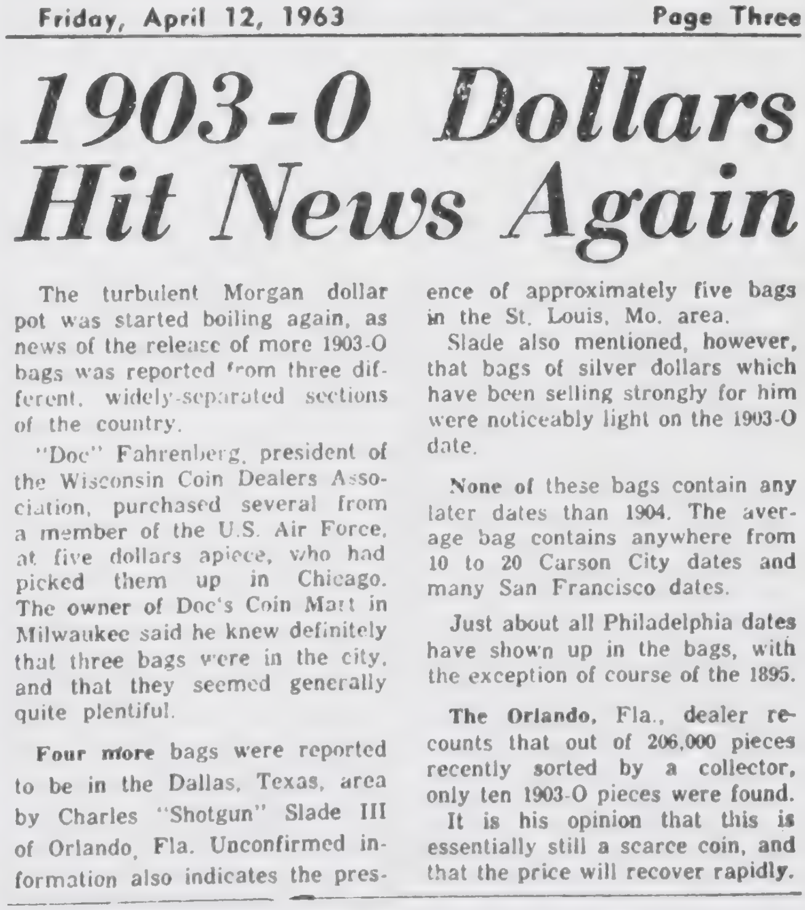
Dozens of bags of 1903-O dollars were released in 1962-1964. Exactly how many coins were involved is not known, and guesses have ranged from 60,000 or so to over 1,000,000. Wayne Miller's estimate is 60,000 to 100,000. Probably, the truth lies somewhere between 60,000 and several hundred thousand. I suggest 200,000 to 350,000.

Numismatic "Silver Rush!"

For decades, the Treasury Department and various banks stored hundreds of millions of 1878-1921 Morgan dollars and 1921-1935 Peace dollars. While collectors sought pieces of interest and sometimes looked through bank holdings, or laid away a bag or two for investment purposes, there were so many silver dollars that the majority remained untouched.

The 1903-O bonanza changed everything. A "silver rush" was on! As news spread, thousands of fortune seekers cleaned out the vaults of local and regional banks, which for a time were resupplied with new shipments by the Federal Reserve. In time, more former rarities came to light, some in very small quantities (only a couple dozen of the rare 1893-S, if indeed that many, and perhaps none of 1895-O at all), others by the millions.

Early Philadelphia, Carson City, New Orleans, and San Francisco issues became plentiful in numerous instances. Still, some remained rare. By March 1964, the Treasury was nearly out of silver dollars. Articles in newspapers in Montana, Nevada, and other states in which everyday use of the coins was common, bemoaned the impending day that such coins might no longer be avail-



Friday, April 12, 1963 **Page Three**

1903-0 Dollars Hit News Again

The turbulent Morgan dollar pot was started boiling again, as news of the release of more 1903-O bags was reported from three different, widely-separated sections of the country.

"Doc" Fahrenberg, president of the Wisconsin Coin Dealers Association, purchased several from a member of the U.S. Air Force, at five dollars apiece, who had picked them up in Chicago. The owner of Doc's Coin Mart in Milwaukee said he knew definitely that three bags were in the city, and that they seemed generally quite plentiful.

Four more bags were reported to be in the Dallas, Texas, area by Charles "Shotgun" Slade III of Orlando, Fla. Unconfirmed information also indicates the presence of approximately five bags in the St. Louis, Mo. area.

Slade also mentioned, however, that bags of silver dollars which have been selling strongly for him were noticeably light on the 1903-O date.

None of these bags contain any later dates than 1904. The average bag contains anywhere from 10 to 20 Carson City dates and many San Francisco dates.

Just about all Philadelphia dates have shown up in the bags, with the exception of course of the 1895.

The Orlando, Fla., dealer recounts that out of 206,000 pieces recently sorted by a collector, only ten 1903-O pieces were found. It is his opinion that this is essentially still a scarce coin, and that the price will recover rapidly.

In autumn 1962 and early 1963, 1903-O dollars, which catalogued $1,500 each at the time in the *Guide Book of United States Coins*, were featured in many news items, including this from the April 12, 1963 issue of *Coin World*.

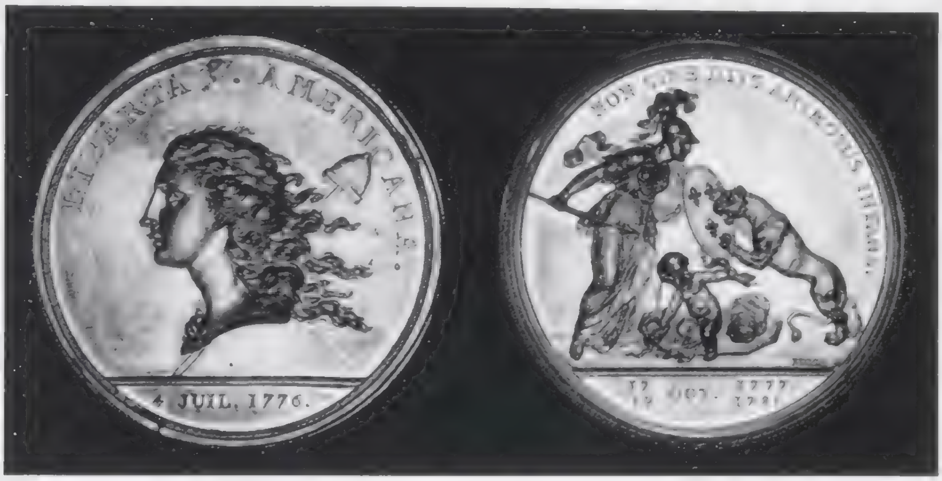
able. Legislation was introduced to mint more silver dollars. Such articles simply increased the demand for what few million silver dollars remained in the Federal Reserve system and Treasury Building vaults.

In March 1964, visitors to Washington, D.C. were greeted with the unusual sight of long lines of people with pockets stuffed with cash, some with wheelbarrows, eager to acquire $1,000 mint bags from the payout windows in the Treasury Building (with certain Federal Reserve System employees making nice profits on the side). On March 25, 1964, the Treasury called a halt and the government took stock of the situation and held back the remaining pieces deemed to be of numismatic importance. By that time, only about three million silver dollars remained in the Treasury Building vaults. An inventory of the undistributed coins showed that Carson City issues, particularly those of the 1880-1885 years, were on hand in tremendous quantities. In fact, the larger part of the original mintages of these pieces was still held by the government! After all but several million silver dollars had been passed out at face value. These were subsequently sold in a series of seven auctions held by the General Services Administration during the 1972-1980 years.

From the preceding incredible scenario the 1903-O Morgan dollar remains as one of the most interesting mementoes. There are enough around that, unlike Howard Newcomb in 1925, you can easily (and inexpensively) buy one now.

ADVENTURE NO. 9

THE 1776 LIBERTAS AMERICANA MEDAL



The 1776-dated Libertas Americana medal, struck in Paris via arrangements made by Benjamin Franklin, is one of the most important issues associated with the history of the United States. The Liberty-with-cap motif was later adapted for use on copper half cents and cents. (Harry W. Bass, Jr. Collection, Part I, 1999, Lot 2084)

A Medal Attracts Notice

In the field of American numismatics, early medals, while incredibly interesting, are hardly in the mainstream of interest. Instead, most collectors devote their attention to Morgan silver dollars, large copper cents, gold coins by design types, or some other aspect of the federal series.

It thus came as a pleasant surprise in 1999, when my company offered for sale several important early American medals as part of the Harry W. Bass, Jr. Collection, that bidder interest was intense for this obscure but very interesting specialty. While the cabinet mainly consisted of United States gold coins, which were sold in sales II, III, and IV, there were many other series represented, and Sale I was where the non-gold issues were showcased.

Of the rarer pieces, two issues in particular attracted a lot of attention: the 1776 Libertas Americana medal as described here and the De Fleury medal, which forms the 24th "adventure" discussed later in the present cabinet of American numismatic treasures.

The Catalogue Description

The Libertas Americana medal, offered as Lot 2084, was described as follows:

> **"1776" Libertas Americana medal. Silver. Betts-615. Loubat-4. Proof-64.** Plain edge. 783.4 grains; 47.5 mm. A deeply mirrored near-gem specimen with reflective fields and frosted design motifs. Pale rose, sky blue, gold, and violet iridescent toning graces both sides, adding immeasurably to the overall appeal. The medal is accompanied by a round green leatherette box, somewhat tattered on the outside, with faded red velvet on the inside. The cover closes with two hook and eye snaps. While perhaps not contemporary to the medal enclosed within, the box is almost certainly of nineteenth century origin, and perhaps custom made for an earlier owner of the medal.
>
> *Obverse:* The inscription LIBERTAS AMERICANA is in an arc above, 4 JUIL. 1776 is in the exergue below. At the center is the head of *Libertas Americana*, a.k.a. Miss Liberty, facing left, with rich tresses of hair flowing behind, set against a liberty cap on pole.

> The bottom of the pole is seen below her neck, and the end of the pole with cap behind her hair to the upper right.
>
> *Reverse:* With inscription NON SINE DIIS ANIMOSUS INFANS (the infant is not bold without divine aid) above, 17 OCT. 1777 and 19 OCT. 1781. The allegorical motif on the reverse is a fine example of the engraver's art. Minerva, clad in breastplate and plumed helmet, holds a shield bearing the fleur de lys of France. The infant Hercules (representing the new American nation) kneels in the protective shadow of Minerva's shield, grasping a strangled serpent in each tiny fist. The reptiles represent the defeats of General "Gentleman Johnny" Burgoyne (17 October, 1777) and General George Cornwallis (19 October, 1781). The British lion stands, forepaws upon Minerva's shield. Its tail is between its rear legs, a heraldic signal of cowardice or defeat, as, indeed, it may also be in nature. In some nineteenth-century accounts (citations on request to the successful bidder) this particular breed of cat has been called incorrectly a *leopard* or a *panther.*
>
> This die combination yields a highly prized rarity when struck in copper, as usually seen. Silver impressions are few and far between, and often a period of *years* will elapse between appearances on the open market. The Harry Bass Collection specimen is sharply struck with even the smallest detail boldly rendered.
>
> The usual small rim cud on obverse at 7:00 attests to the originality of this specimen. Here, indeed, is one of the nicest quality examples among the few pieces offered in our era. As such, this lovely and exceedingly important medal will no doubt be a focal point in this section of the sale.

The offering of this medal in the Bass sale and the reviewing of it in connection with the present book reminded me of a comment made by the late Harvey N. Roehl, founder of the Vestal Press, an important New York specialty publishing house. He had recently engaged in lengthy correspondence with Frank Holland, who owned and operated a museum in London. "English writers do not use a *sentence* when the opportunity exists to write a *paragraph.*"

And thus perhaps it was so with the description of this particular medal, although I am not an Englishman. As I immersed myself in the study of this and related medals in connection with preparing the catalogue, I became increasingly fascinated. It is not that I had not handled such a medal before, as they are not great rarities, and perhaps a half dozen or so silver strikings and the best part of two dozen copper impressions had passed my way. However, when writing the Bass catalogue I closeted myself with dozens of books on numismatics and American history and endeavored to keep away from distractions.

Like the English correspondent of Harvey Roehl, I did not want to leave anything out. Thus, details that might have been compressed into a paragraph or two were presented in expanded form—to share my excitement—numismatic sesquipedalianism, in effect.

How the Medal Was Made

The dies for the Libertas Americana medal were engraved in Paris in 1782 by Augustin Dupré at the behest of Benjamin Franklin. Selected correspondence on the matter, to and from Franklin, is quoted below.

Franklin conceived the idea of the medal and suggested the motifs. Robert R. Livingston suggested the mottoes. A French artist, Esprit-Antoine Gibelin, sketched the design, and the work was executed in die form in 1782 by Augustin Dupré.

The following letters to and from Benjamin Franklin are cited from Jared Sparks, *Franklin's Works,* as quoted by William Sumner Appleton, *American Journal of Numismatics,* November 1867, pp. 63-64.

From Benjamin Franklin, who was in France at the time, to Robert R. Livingston, March 4, 1782:

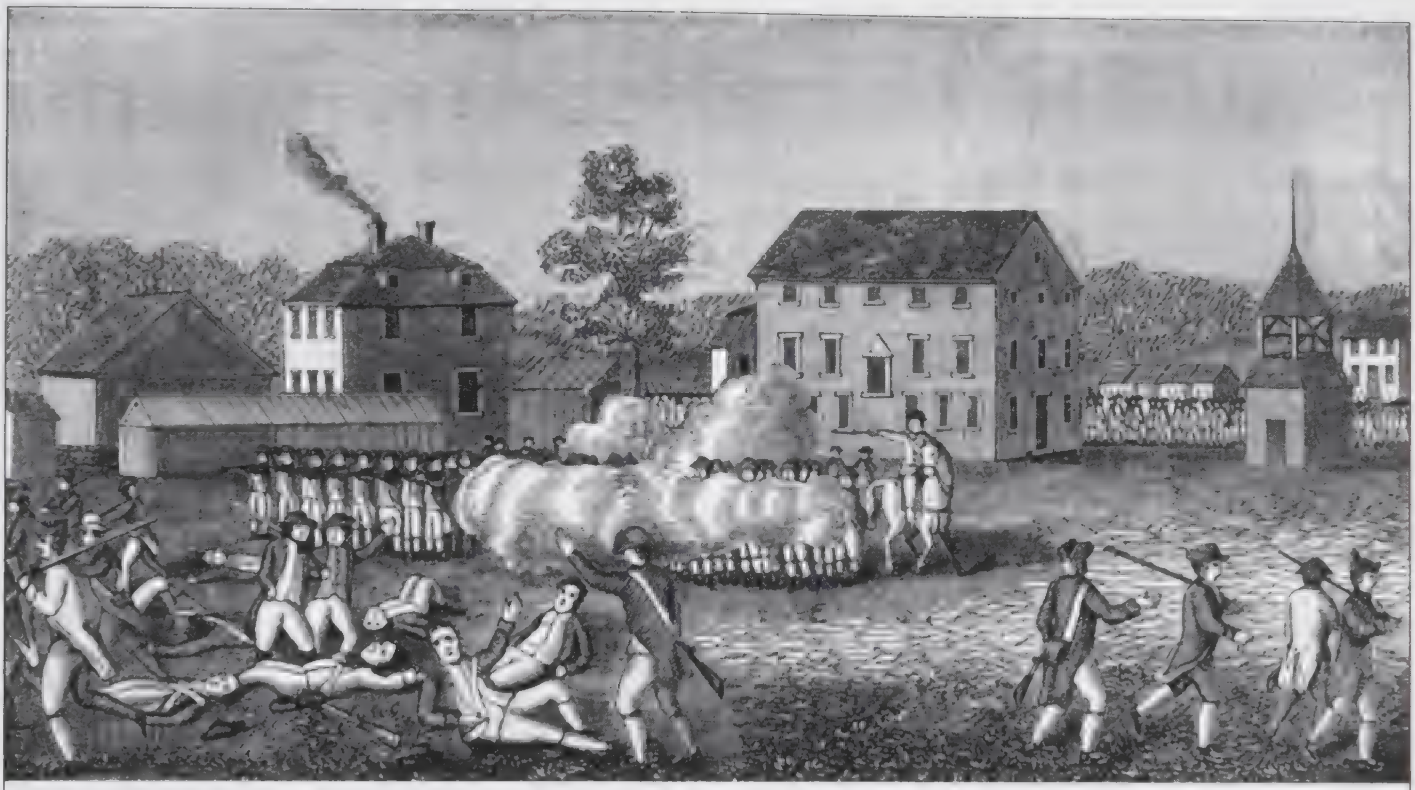
> This puts me in mind of a medal I have had a mind to strike, since the late great event you gave me an account of, representing the United States by the figure of an infant Hercules in his cradle, strangling the two serpents; and France by that of Minerva, sitting by as his nurse, with her spear and helmet, and her robe specked with a few *fleurs de lis.*
>
> The extinguishing of two entire armies in one war is what has rarely happened, and it gives a presage of the future force of our growing empire.

Franklin to Sir William Jones, March 17, 1783:

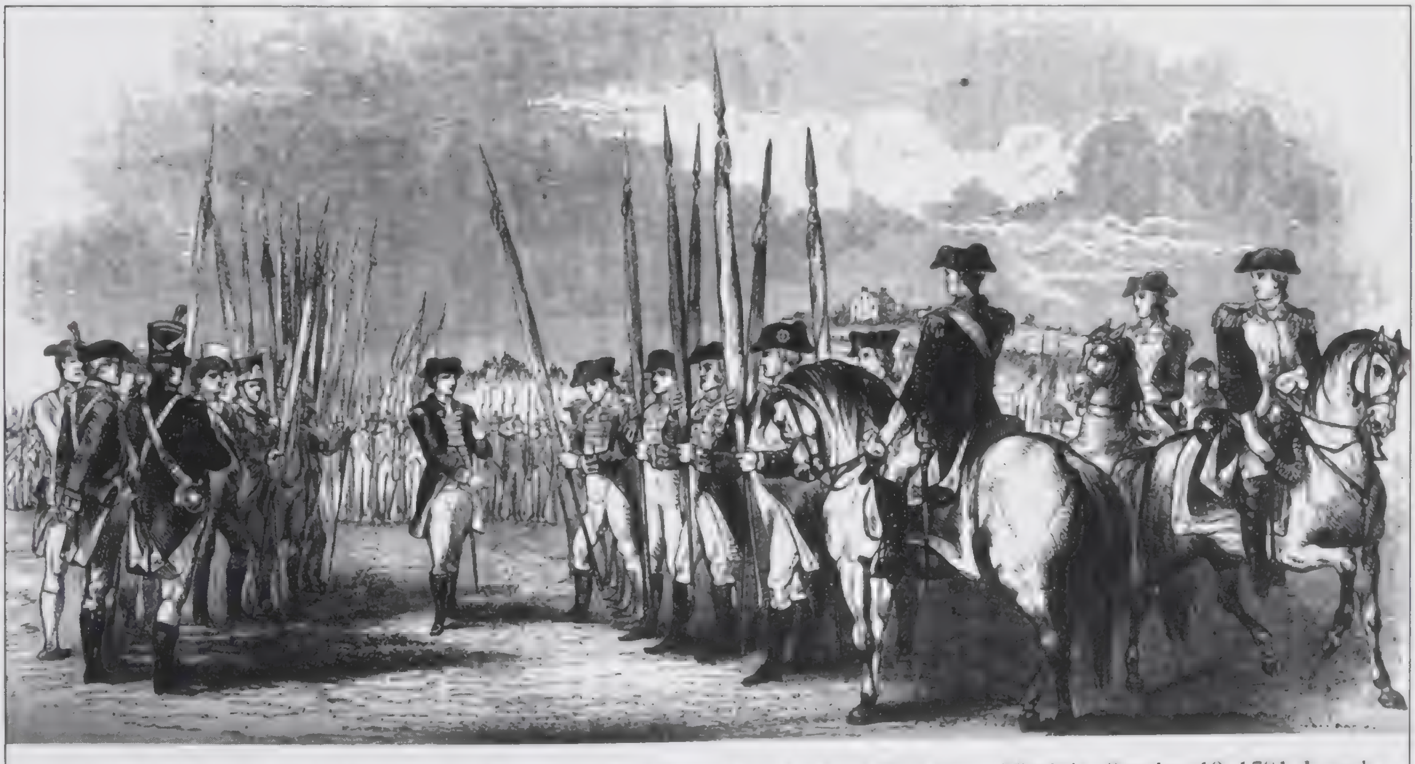
> The engraving of my medal, which you know was projected before the peace, is but just finished. None are yet struck in hard metal, but will be in a few days.
>
> In the meantime, having this good opportunity by Mr. Penn, I send you one of the *épreuves.* You will see that I have profited by some of your ideas, and adopted the mottoes you were so kind as to furnish.

Franklin to Rohan, the Grand Master of Malta, April 6, 1783 (which, among other things, indicates the prestige of a *silver* striking and the possibility, which never saw fruition, of adding COMITIA AMERICANA to the die for later strikings):

> My Lord,
>
> I have the honor to address to your Eminent Highness the medal, which I have lately had struck. It is a homage of gratitude, my Lord, which is due to the interest you have taken in our cause; and we no less



Beginning of the American Revolution. British soldiers in uniform clash with local patriots on the village green in Lexington, Massachusetts, in 1775. The gambrel-roofed building with two chimneys is Buckman's Tavern, while the larger structure to its right is the Meeting House. The two-story belfry shown at the right was depicted generations later on the 1925 Lexington-Concord Sesquicentennial commemorative half dollar. (Lossing, *Field-Book of the Revolution*, Vol. I)



End of the American Revolution. The surrender of British standards at Yorktown, Virginia, October 19, 1781. It took time for the news to spread, and at the time British forces still occupied New York City, Savannah, Charleston, and a few other cities and districts. Peace was finally agreed upon by commissioners from both nations on January 20, 1783. The American Army remained organized until November 3, 1783. On December 23, Washington resigned his commission as commander in chief. (Lossing, *Field-Book of the Revolution*, Vol. II)

> owe it to your virtues, and to your Eminent Highness's wise administration of government.

Franklin to Livingston, April 15, 1783:

> I have caused to be struck here the medal which I formerly mentioned to you, the design of which you seemed to approve. I enclose one of them in silver, for the President of Congress, and one in copper for yourself; the impression in copper is thought to appear best, and you will soon receive a number for the members.
>
> I have presented one to the King, and another to the Queen, both in gold, and one in silver to each of the ministers, as a monumental acknowledgment, which may go down to future ages, of the obligations we are under to this nation. It is mighty well received, and gives general pleasure. If the Congress approve it, as I hope they will, I may add something on the die (for those to be struck hereafter) to show that it was done by their order, which I could not venture to do until I had authority for it.

Rohan, Grand Master of Malta, to Franklin, June 21, 1783 (it is seen that Rohan, like many gentlemen of the time, had his own cabinet of medals):

> Sir,
>
> I received with the most lively sensibility the medal, which your Excellency sent me, and the value I set upon this acquisition leaves my gratitude unbounded. This monument of American liberty has a distinguished place in my cabinet.

Letter from Franklin to the President of the United States Congress, September 13, 1783:

> I am happy to hear that both the device and workmanship of the medal are approved with you, as they have the good fortune to be by far the best judges on this side of the water. It has been esteemed a well-timed, as well as a well-merited, compliment here, and has its good effects.
>
> Since the two first which you mention as received, I have sent by different opportunities so many, as that every member of Congress might have one. I hope they are come safe to hand by this time.

The Libertas Americana Tradition

Regarding the original Libertas Americana medals, it seems that at least two gold specimens were struck, these being presented to the king and queen of France, only a few silver examples (including to the French ministers), and a fairly large number of copper impressions, the latter including one for each member of the American Congress.

The beautiful obverse personification of Liberty was copied, to some extent, by Joseph Wright and other early United States Mint engravers for federal copper coinage of the 1793-1796 era. In later times the motif continued to be admired, and today numismatists rank the Liberty Cap design, as it is called, among their favorites.

Inspired by the design, the combination of the liberty cap and Miss Liberty appeared in other forms as well, including Christian Gobrecht's silver coinage of the 1830s, extending for some denominations to 1891, and on many patterns, medals, and other productions. In the 1870s, J.A. Bolen produced his own adaptation which was employed on certain store cards and Centennial Exhibition related items.

In the 1970s Chief Engraver Frank Gasparro produced a version of the Liberty Cap motif which at the time was considered for use on the metallic dollar and was enthusiastically endorsed by the numismatic community (however, the Susan B. Anthony motif was used); an earlier version of Gasparro's Liberty Cap design had appeared on an ANA medal, in which connection he worked with ANA Executive Director Ed Rochette.

In numismatic circles, the desirability of the Libertas Americana medal—typically encountered in copper—was recognized at an early date, even before the hobby became organized (more or less) circa 1857-1860. Many examples could be given, but these two will suffice:

In the catalogued sale conducted by Horatio Hill (169 Broadway, New York City), April 22-23, 1848, of books, maps, and medals of the late D.B. Worden, of Paris, which had become the property of the State of New York, numismatic items included an Libertas Americana medal.

The Documentary History of the State of New York, by E.B. O'Callaghan, M.D., published in four volumes in 1850 by Weed, Parsons & Co., Albany, NY, included some information on numismatics. Chapter XXIII, "Medals and Coins," featured three plates of coins engraved and separately printed by J.E. Gavit. Among the items depicted was a Libertas Americana medal.

It is relevant to note that during the early nineteenth century there was a great passion for medals among French citizens and numismatists, and the works of DuVivier, Caqué, Gatteaux, Puymaurin, and others were widely collected. France was viewed as the world's premier source for art medals, and, as with the Comitia Americana medals, certain early United States historical medals were produced there, the most familiar being Dupré's Libertas Americana, which was appreciated by collectors on both sides of the Atlantic. The French were quite interested in other American subjects as well, and I need but mention the Series Numismatica, which included two versions of a medal of George Washington (one with correct spelling and the other with "WASINGTON").[1]

In the *American Journal of Numismatics*, October 1888, p. 31, Hon. George M. Parsons commented concerning the medal:[2]

> "The obverse shows a beautiful head of Liberty in bold relief. On the shoulder is a staff which bears at the end the Phrygian cap.
>
> During the French Revolution, which followed in 1789, this cap became the emblem of republicanism. The same device was afterwards adopted for some of the early American copper coins; it was never replaced by anything more beautiful....

John W. Adams' Appreciation

In 1991, John W. Adams, in "Back To Medal Collecting," a contribution to the *American Numismatic Association Centennial Anthology*, listed early medals authorized by the American Congress (in Latin, *Comitia Americana*):[3]

> The medals, 11 in all, were authorized by Congress to celebrate major victories in the Revolutionary War. Typically, a specimen in gold or silver was awarded to the hero who led the victory. Usually, additional pieces were struck from the same dies in copper and, though generally unknown by present day numismatists, are eminently collectable.
>
> The series begins in 1776 with Washington's dramatic appearance before Boston (causing the British evacuation thereof), the Washington Before Boston medal. It continues as follows:
>
> 1777 Saratoga General Gates.
>
> 1779 Stony Point with *three issues:* General Wayne, Col. de Fleury, and Major Stewart.
>
> 1779 Paulus Hook, featuring Major Henry Lee.
>
> 1779 Capture of the *Serapis* by Capt. John Paul Jones.
>
> 1781 The Battle of Cowpens, *three issues* featuring General Morgan, and colonels Howard and William Washington.
>
> 1781 Eutaw Springs, General Greene.
>
> 1781 Yorktown, Libertas Americana.
>
> A careful counter will note that we have cited *12* medals, not 11. The last named, the famous Libertas Americana, was not authorized by Congress but was carried out by Benjamin Franklin, then our Minister to France, acting on his own. Although Congress had voted thanks to Count de Grasse and Count de Rochambeau for the French help at Yorktown, Franklin believed that a more tangible expression of gratitude was in order. Actually, the series shrinks back to 11, because none of the Lee medals has survived.
>
> Voting the medals was one thing, procuring them was another. Our infant nation had no facilities to make ordinary coinage, much less memorials worthy of the occasion. A committee of Congress was appointed and this body turned to France for artistic support. The French Academy provided the designs and inscriptions; the best artists in that land were retained to engrave the dies; and the Paris Mint, the best equipped facility in the world at that time, struck the medals. Aesthetically, the work of the committee was a complete success. Indeed, from that standpoint, it has no rival in all of American numismatics. Logistically, the effort was more labored. It took eight years, from 1781 through 1789, to complete the project despite the active participation of such patriots as Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson and David Humphrey.
>
> In 1789, Jefferson returned from France with two complete sets of medals: his own, in pewter, has since been lost; the set in silver which he delivered personally to General Washington now resides in the Massachusetts Historical Society...."

Augustin Dupré

Augustin Dupré, engraver of the dies for the Libertas Americana medal, was born in St. Etienne, province Loire, France, on October 6, 1748. As a young man he was an apprentice in the making of firearms, where, among other skills, he learned engraving. In 1768 he moved to Paris, where he worked under an engraver and die sinker, soon becoming recognized for his own expertise. In addition, he did chasing and engraving work on jewelry, *objets d'art*, and sculpture, some of this in the employ of Jacques Clamier. His artistry on an elegantly decorated and embellished writing desk for the Empress Maria Louisa attracted wide admiration.

Soon, he focused upon medallic art, and in time he achieved great fame. His work included portraits of Louis XVI, Napoleon, and other famous French personages, as well as work on coinage dies. In 1791 he was named as the engraver general at the Paris Mint, which during that era was known worldwide for the artistry of its products. It was natural that during and after the American Revolution, the Paris Mint would be the source for medals of a high order of artistry, as there was little capability in the United States for engraving and, in particular, for striking large-format pieces.

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[1] Other Series Numismatica subjects with an American connection included William Penn (British friend to the colonists) and Benjamin Franklin.

[2] Parsons, of Columbus, Ohio, was an important figure on the numismatic scene in the 1880s and was a frequent contributor to the *American Journal of Numismatics*. On October 16, 1885, certain items from his collection, including early American medals, were auctioned by Édouard Frossard, an event which saw 508 lots realize $1,108.53. Today his name is best remembered for the June 24-27, 1914, *Catalogue of the Magnificent Collection of American Colonial Coins, Historical and National Medals, United States Coins, U.S. Fractional Currency, Canadian Coins and Medals, Etc., Formed by the Late Hon. George M. Parsons*, prepared by Henry Chapman, one of the most important cabinets to be sold in that era.

[3] Here synopsized and adapted.

In 1889 sketches by him were donated by his family to the Boston Public Library and, per an item in the *American Journal of Numismatics*, included "some of his original drawings, models, dies, and essays, relating to work done on medals for the United States, and more especially in reference to the medals of Franklin."[1]

Today, copper impressions of the Libertas Americana medal are readily collectible, as at least a handful appear on the market each year via auctions and dealer offerings. Dr. George J. Fuld estimated that well over 100 copper impressions exist and upward of a dozen in silver.[2] As is true of quite a few other "adventure" items in the present text, we are all fortunate that such things are not immensely popular, or else they would be worth a king's ransom.

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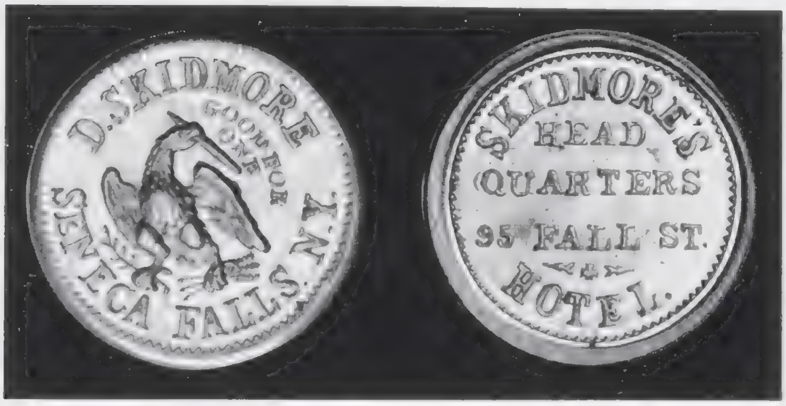
[1] Today the sketches are preserved by the American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia.

[2] Fuld, note to author, 2001, during the reading of the manuscript. Further: "I bought a gem in silver in Paris in 1960 from a woman coin dealer, and paid $40. This medal went to Ted Craige, later to John Adams."

ADVENTURE NO. 10

THE AMERICAN EAGLE HOLDS A CIGAR

Tobacco for the Bird



The curious and numismatically famous Civil War token of Darius Skidmore, Seneca Falls, New York, was made by William Bridgens, a New York City diesinker. The American eagle is seen holding a cigar!

Such tokens exist by the hundreds and are quite inexpensive today—but what an interesting story they could tell.

Seneca Falls

I don't recall ever having done more than pass through the town of Seneca Falls, in upstate New York, and this would have been in the early 1960s. The next time I am there I will linger—and see what, if anything, remains in the way of buildings from the Civil War era.

Located between the northern end of Lake Seneca and the northern end of Lake Cayuga, closer to the latter, the town was first settled in 1787 and was incorporated on April 22, 1831. In the late 1850s transportation facilities included the New York Central Railroad and the Seneca Canal. The Seneca River, with a fall of 51 feet, furnished abundant water power for local industries and gave rise to the town name. By 1860 there were seven churches, the Seneca Falls Academy, two newspapers, and factories making diverse products, including two makers of fire engines (Silsby, Mynderse & Co. and Cowing & Co.) and factories turning out machines and parts, iron goods, and woolen goods, among other items.[1]

In the annals of fire-fighting equipment the name of Silsby is well remembered as it was among the top several largest producers of steam-powered pumpers, which when fired up could spray a large stream of water into the top floor of a five-story or taller building.

Darius Skidmore

In this milieu Darius Skidmore operated Skidmore's Hotel and Dining Saloon. A Civil War era directory listing illustrates the establishment as a four-floor block,

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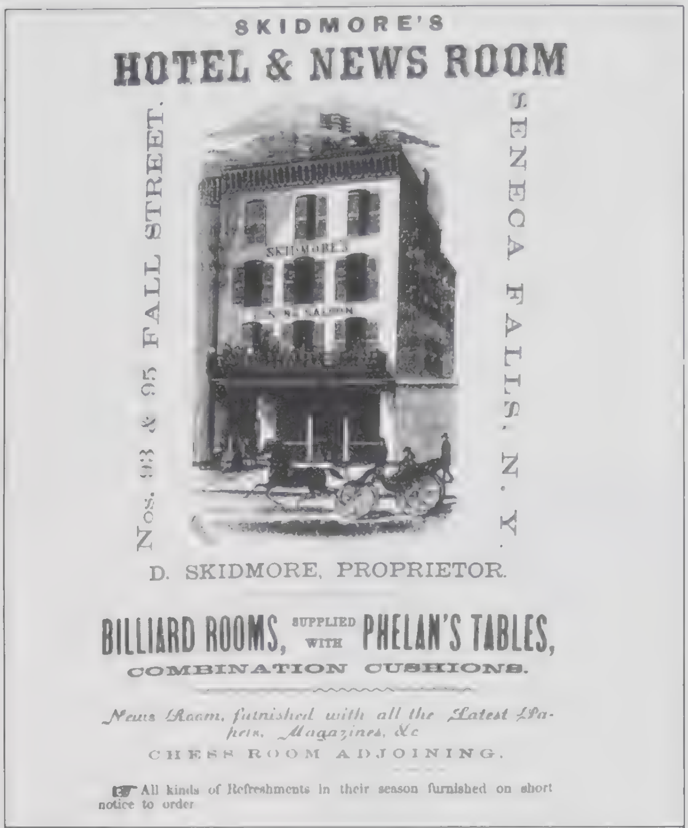
[1] Sources include: *Gazetteer of the State of New York*, by J.H. French, published by R. Pearsall Smith, Syracuse, NY, 1860. p. 617. • "The Seneca Falls Skidmore Hotel Token," by Terry M. Schaub, *Journal of the Civil War Token Society*, Summer 1989. • Civil War Store Cards, by George and Melvin Fuld. • The author's extensive research into the biography and tokens of William Bridgens. • Seneca Falls was the site, on July 19-20, 1848, of the first public political meeting held in the United States on the subject of women's rights. Organized by Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, the meeting drew 240 participants (40 of them men) and resulted in the "Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments," the first feminist manifesto issued in America.



SKIDMORE'S

HOTEL & NEWS ROOM

Nos. 93 & 95 FALL STREET.

SENECA FALLS, N. Y.

D. SKIDMORE, PROPRIETOR.

BILLIARD ROOMS, SUPPLIED WITH PHELAN'S TABLES,

COMBINATION CUSHIONS.

News Room, furnished with all the Latest Papers, Magazines, &c

CHESS ROOM ADJOINING.

☞ All kinds of Refreshments in their season furnished on short notice to order

Advertisement for Skidmore's Hotel from the *Seneca Falls Directory*. (From "The Seneca Falls Skidmore Hotel Token" by Terry M. Schaub, in *The Civil War Token Journal*, Summer 1989)

with three windows across each of the top floors, with a door and windows on the ground floor. Lettered across the front is: SKIDMORE'S / DINING SALOON. The accompanying text includes this:[1]

> Nos. 93 and 95 Fall Street.... Billiard rooms supplied with Phelan's Tables, combination cushions. News Room, furnished with all the latest papers, magazines, &c. Chess room adjoining. All kinds of refreshments in their season furnished on short notice.

It would seem from the foregoing that Skidmore's was a gathering place for reading, games, and other entertainment, in addition to dispensing beverages and serving meals. In an era in which in-home entertainment was often minimal, facilities such as Skidmore's acted as popular social clubs. Just about every town and city in America had such places.

The offering of "all the latest newspapers and magazines" was an invitation for the passer or itinerant traveler to stop in, relax, read, and enjoy the surroundings.

Darius Skidmore had owned the building since November 9, 1857, when he purchased it from Obadiah Platt for $500, a tidy sum for the period. By 1860, when the decennial federal census was taken, Skidmore's operation was described as a "news room and dining saloon." His real estate was valued at $9,000 and his personal property at $1,000. Living with him was his wife Catherine, age 51, a young girl named Kate, and an older lady, Mary, age 89. In 1863 the business was designated as Skidmore's Head Quarters Hotel.

After the Civil War the business name was changed to the Sheridan House and Billiard Rooms.[2] The *Seneca County Directory* of 1867-8, probably mostly compiled in 1866, gives this trade style and, separately, lists a Skidmore relative, Henry Frantz, as a blacksmith in Waterloo, New York. Frantz had served in the Civil War in Company I in the 50th New York Engineer Regiment.

In 1867 Darius Skidmore sold his business to Frantz, who renamed the place as the Frantz House Hotel, Restaurant, and Confectionery. Skidmore, retired, lived in the building, probably upstairs.

Apparently, there were problems with the hotel, and on July 24, 1875, at 11 o'clock in the morning, the Frantz property was sold at auction to satisfy a mortgage of March 1, 1867. The purchaser was Augusta G. Miller, who paid $5,000 for it.

By this time there may have been a few tokens remaining in circulation around town, little advertising reminders of Skidmore's business during the Civil War. Therein lies a tale:

William Bridgens

William H. Bridgens was among the more active diesinkers in New York City in the late 1850s and early 1860s. Bridgens was a prolific issuer of medalets and Civil War tokens. One of his tokens of the 1863 period bears the inscription: BRIDGENS / METAL TOKENS / & / STORE CARDS / 189 / WILLIAM ST. N.Y. His other activities (*medal* making and coin dealing) are not mentioned.

Little if anything concerning the personal side of Bridgens has been located in numismatic literature. Leonard Forrer, in *Biographical Dictionary of Medallists*, 1904,[3] almost dismisses him:

> Bridgens, W.H. (*Amer.*). Die-sinker of New-York, who issued a series of portrait medals of the presidents of the United States.

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[1] *Brigham's Directory and Business Advertiser*, Geneva, NY, 1862-3.

[2] More than one hostelry changed its name to honor Civil War General Philip Henry Sheridan; e.g., in Wolfeboro, NH, the venerable Lake House Hotel was changed to the Sheridan House.

[3] Vol. I, p. 282. However, the Forrer text, published in England, emphasizes medals, and little is said about American engravers of token dies. Emil Sigel is not listed at all (even though Sigel did create medals including a highly-acclaimed medal of Lincoln for the American Numismatic and Archaeological Society).

A printed entry for him appears in *Longworth's American Almanac, New-York Register, and City Directory,* 1834. His residence is given as 10 Moore Street, New York City, and no occupation is stated.

One of the best-known of Bridgens' pre-war productions is the Eight Presidents medal, signed "W.H. BRIDGENS NEW YORK" at the bottom of the reverse. Depicted on the obverse are presidents Washington (at the center), John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison (surname misspelled as MADDISON), James Monroe (as MUNROE),[1] John Quincy Adams, Andrew Jackson, and Martin Van Buren. DeWitt in his text and Russell Rulau and George Fuld in their book date the production of this medal to "about 1840," probably because no later presidents are depicted.[2]

Bridgens' Civil War Tokens

William H. Bridgens' Civil War token dies are very distinctive, with the reverse dies including several interesting and very distinctive pictorial issues.

With but one exception, dentils of the die borders are composed of small triangles, a sawtooth arrangement, *dancetting* as it is known in heraldry. Ornaments included a spearhead found on the dies of no other diesinker. New York was sometimes abbreviated with a hyphen, as N-Y.

Bridgens as a Coin Dealer

Bridgens was a coin dealer as well, but if he issued any price lists, none are known today. On March 26, 1867, Augustus B. Sage, New York City coin dealer who had been prominent circa 1857-1861, penned this reminiscence, which was published in the *American Journal of Numismatics,* May 1867:

> In 1859 or 1860 I remember making a purchase from Mr. Billings [*sic;* Bridgens was intended], the die sinker of William Street, of a number of medalets struck in Birmingham, England, and among them two of the medal of Washington and the Presidents.
>
> At the time they were very scarce, and the "fever" for "Washingtons" was commencing. I sent one to the Mint, and the other, I believe, went to a collection in this city, but I understand that some gentleman, a few years ago, discovered the dies in Europe, and forthwith had a "goodly supply" for the market.

Sage wound down his coin-dealing activities in 1861, and later served in the Civil War, still later going into the bookselling trade and practicing law.

Bridgens continued his coin dealership through at least 1863, for a sale conducted by Bangs, Merwin & Co., New York City, January 29-30, 1863, which bore no consignor's or owner's name on the cover, was attributed to William H. Bridgens by Emmanuel J. Attinelli, who also commented:[3] "This collection belonged to the well-known die-sinker, whose medals are numerous and fine." This would seem to indicate that Attinelli may have known Bridgens. Alternatively, the catalogue contents may have been attributed to Bridgens by virtue of the latter's advertisement on the back cover, which noted this (in part) and confirms his continuing activity in numismatics:

WM. H. BRIDGENS
Die-Sinker & Medalist
Dealer in
COINS, MEDALS & TOKENS
189 William Street, New-York.
N.B. Coins, bought, sold, or exchanged.

The *American Journal of Numismatics* was first published in May 1866. As the periodical was issued in New York City, and many numismatic activities of the city were mentioned, and Bridgens was not, it can be presumed that Bridgens' coin-dealing activities were minimal by that time. In contrast, much was written about Emil Sigel and George Hampden Lovett, two other New York City diesinkers.

Political and Store Card Dies by Bridgens

Bridgens' dies for Civil War tokens are among the most artistically interesting in the series. Basically, these were used in combination dies listing the names and occupations of various merchants and tradesmen, these being part of the "store card" series. In some instances two of Bridgens' pictorial dies were combined to produce what are called "patriotic" tokens—without the name of a merchant.

The following descriptions of the Bridgens dies provide a setting for the curious token issued by Darius Skidmore.

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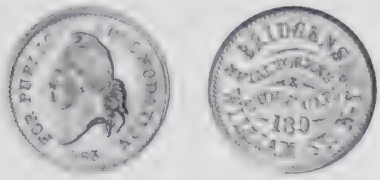
[1] The "Munroe" misspelling was very common elsewhere, including in newspaper accounts, titles and headings in numismatic auction catalogues, etc.

[2] DeWitt and Sullivan, *American Political Badges and Medalets,* pp. 152-153. Rulau-Fuld *Medallic Portraits of Washington,* 1985, first edition, p. 91 (the 2nd edition of this work was published in 1999). The obverse of the Eight Presidents die is also known as a muling with an 1856 campaign die relating to Buchanan (and Breckinridge) with a buck jumping over a cannon (Baker-221K in the Rulau-Fuld text). Baker-382 and 382A are related (Rulau-Fuld p. 173) and are mulings with the obverse of the Buchanan medal (depicting Washington, signed KEY under the bust) with the Eight Presidents die. The normal obverse of the Buchanan medal is attributed to William F. Key, Philadelphia (cf. DeWitt JB 1856-2). As DeWitt says, the mulings were probably made in the 1860s for collectors; "the reverse die [with the eight presidents; DeWitt assigns the rebus die as the obverse] shows evidences of wear and of being recut."

[3] In *Numisgraphics,* published in 1876.

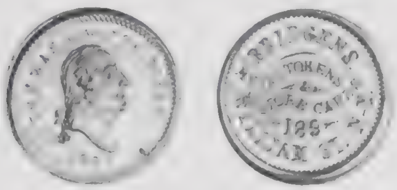
French Liberty Head Die



This is one of Bridgens' best known dies. Depicted is his version of the French Liberty Head, the style used on certain French coins as early as the 1790s, but best known to numismatists on Robert Lovett, Jr.'s 1860 store card and 1861 Confederate States of America cent struck in Philadelphia. The surrounding inscription, FOR PUBLIC ACCOMODATION includes a misspelling of the last word, which should be ACCOMMODATION. The date 1863 is below.

The French Liberty Head was a very popular motif for Civil War tokens, and it was used not only by Bridgens and Lovett, but by a handful of other engravers as well.

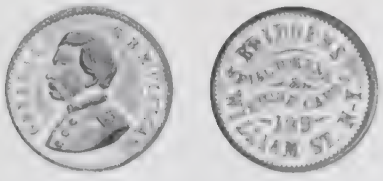
THE WASHINGTON TOKEN Die



Front row center among Civil War tokens bearing the portrait of the Father of Our Country is this Bridgens die, featuring an adaptation of the Jean Antoine Houdon (1785) portrait, a representation also used by other engravers during the Civil War era.

As many numismatists collect coins, tokens, and medals depicting Washington, using the 1885 *Medallic Portraits of Washington* (W.S. Baker, 1885) and similarly-named later book by George J. Fuld and Russell Rulau, the Bridgens pieces bearing his image and the inscription THE WASHINGTON TOKEN play to an audience beyond Civil War token specialists.

General McClellan Die



Depicted is the head of a famous Civil War figure, with the inscription GENERAL G.B. McCLELLAN. There is no date on the die, but it was probably cut in 1863. In that year McClellan was a favorite national figure for those who opposed Abraham Lincoln, and in 1864 McClellan ran against Lincoln in the presidential election, as discussed below. Perhaps this die and the inscription on die 0256 indicate that Bridgens was anti-Lincoln and the war.

George Brinton McClellan, born in Philadelphia, on December 3, 1826, graduated from West Point in 1846, after which he served in the War with Mexico 1846-1848. After the conflict ended, he explored routes in the Northwest for a transcontinental railroad, selecting Yakima Pass as the best way through the Cascade Mountains (later, better routes were found and employed). Later, he was an observer on the fields of the Crimean War. In 1857 he gained employment with a railroad, eventually working with two of them, Illinois Central and the Ohio & Mississippi lines.

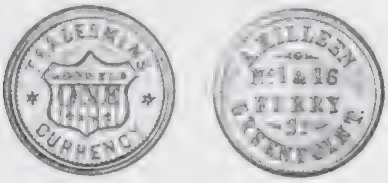
After the fall of Fort Sumter in April 1861, McClellan resigned his railroad post and signed on as major-general of a volunteer corps in Ohio. He became a major-general of the Union Army in May, and in July he was named as general of the Army of the Potomac, followed in November by designation as commander-in-chief of the entire Union Army. The performance of McClellan in his ultimate command has been a matter of discussion for many decades. Most concede that he was overly cautious, attributed to the Confederate enemy strength and powers they did not possess, and, stated simply, was afraid of battle. In November 1862 he was removed from his position by President Lincoln. Without a command, McClellan remained in the Army until his resignation on November 8, 1864.

At the Democratic Party nominating convention in Chicago on August 19, 1864, General George B. McClellan was selected on the first ballot as the presidential candidate. For some time, there had been a popular following for McClellan, some of this being a backlash against Lincoln or, later, General U.S. Grant. At various public events after the relieving of his command, including Sanitary Fairs in the spring and summer of 1864, there were exhibits relating to McClellan, and sometimes votes of popularity would be taken for McClellan vs. Lincoln, these being a draw for visitors.

In 1864, George H. Pendleton, an Ohio congressman, was selected as McClellan's running mate. Union victories before the November 1864 election, including Gen. William T. Sherman's march through Georgia, turned the tide for Lincoln, and McClellan was overwhelmed at the ballot box, gaining 1.8 million votes in comparison to Lincoln's 2.3 million. The Electoral College gave McClellan a paltry 21 votes against 212 for Lincoln.

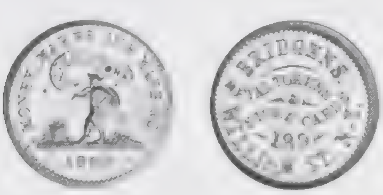
Seeking new challenges, McClellan went to Europe, where he remained until 1868. Returning to America, he found he still had many admirers, some of whom later gave him a house in New York City and stock in the Ohio & Mississippi Railroad. In 1877 he ran for governor of New Jersey, won, and subsequently served a term. He died in 1885, survived by his wife and children.

TRADESMENS CURRENCY Die



This boldly cut die bears the inscription TRADESMENS / CURRENCY. at the top and bottom borders. At the center is a shield inscribed GOOD FOR ONE CENT. The inscription indicates that this die was made as a currency substitute in the coin shortage of 1863. At the time *currency* referred to coins as well as paper money.

MONEY MAKES THE MARE GO Die



Around the border is the inscription MONEY MAKES THE MARE GO and the date 1863. At center is a man walking to the left, with coins spilling to the ground from his stuffed backpack. GO IT BUTTONS inscription on ribbon emanating from his mouth, in the manner of a cartoon. A bucket is on the ground to the left. The exact meaning of the image and inscriptions on this die may refer to the graft that was present among certain contractors who supplied the Union during the Civil War. If so, this may join the HORRORS OF WAR die as a political commentary by Bridgens. The use of the earlier-noted McClellan's portrait on another die may also reflect an anti-war sentiment.

The origin of the phrase on this popular Civil War token has been the subject of speculation for a long time. The *American Journal of Numismatics*, February 1869, p. 81, included an article, "ESSAY On the Disappearance of Coinages, and the Uses, other than as a Circulating Medium, of Coined Money. Part I," by D.L.W., which commenced as follows, without reference to the token:

" 'Money makes the Mare go,' observed some old-time, Sancho-Panziatically[1] spoken, worthy; whose body and bones are long ago returned to their primeval dust and lime; and the world, with that strange love for jingling phrases which has often been remarked, has preserved and handed down to posterity this hardly Solomonian proverb. Why? Because it is witty? Because it is apposite? Because it is 'multum in parvo'?

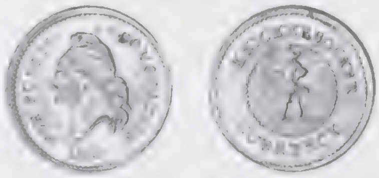
"Not at all, but simply because it is alliterative. Because three words of its five commence with M; and for this reason it has reached us in company with 'Dickery Dickery Dock,' 'Goosey Goosey Gander,' 'Peter Piper,' 'When the Wine is in the Wit is out,' 'Fair Face False Heart,' and the thousand other alliterative Anglo-Saxon-descended proverbs and nursery rhymes with which our infantile wailings of disgust at the world are beguiled to silence, and our more matured love for concisely stated truisms (since we are all more or less 'Samivel Wellers' in that respect) nourished and fostered. But I am wandering from my text ere I commence my discourse, and must resume the 'even tenor of my way,' merely referring those who are curious as to the effect of alliteration to the old English metrical romances, 'Piers Plowman,' etc.; or, if they have no taste for ancient poetry, in which case their numismatic devotion shall not be a bar to their being read out of the circle of true antiquarianism, to the gorgeously colored 'Atalanta in Calydon' of Swinburne.

"But, to return to our mutton:— 'Money makes the Mare go,' and, as the late Marquis of Hastings might have remarked, 'Mares make Money go.'[2] But what else makes Money go? Why does so much coin go out of existence?..."

Apropos of the phrase, the following commentary is from E. Cobham Brewer, *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*, gives in the 25th edition, p. 551, and seems to be even closer to the origin. The attribution is from "Old Glees and Catches," *e.g.*, traditional English songs for multiple voices, especially melodies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries:

"Will you lend me your mare to go a mile?"
"No, she is lame leaping over a stile."
"But if you will her to me spare,
You shall have money for your mare."
"Oh, ho! Say you so?
Money will make the mare to go."

KNICKERBOCKER CURRENCY Die



This pictorial die features "Old Knick" at the center a figure with cane, his coattails in the breeze, walking to the left. This "dandy" or "swell," a society figure, represents Diedrich Knickerbocker, the fictional early New Yorker created by Washington Irving, who used this *nom de plume* in his 1809 book, *A History of New York*. The inscription, KNICKERBOCKER CURRENCY, completes the connection and suggests that such might serve well for money in New York City—which, indeed, the tokens did.

The die is signed BRIDGENS below the standing figure, the only Civil War token die to bear his name.

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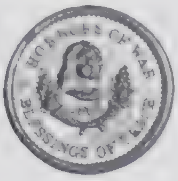
[1] Sancho Panza was Don Quixote's "squire" who rode on an ass and was counterpoint to Quixote's madness. He was an ignorant, but realistic, farm laborer.

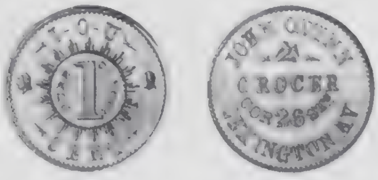
[2] An allusion to the expense of maintaining and exhibiting horses.

HORRORS OF WAR Die



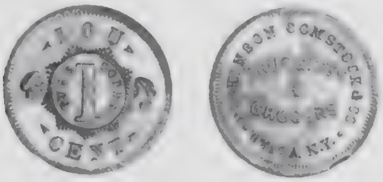
This die is one of the "rarer" Bridgens issues and, unlike many of the others, was not extensively muled in combinations made for sale to numismatists. The inscription HORRORS OF WAR / BLESSINGS OF PEACE is at the top and bottom border. At the center is the head of a distressed woman representing a Civil War soldier's widow. Two crossed cornucopias below her portrait represent what might have been, or will be, if there is peace instead of conflict. This die is not known in combination with any store card die. The inscription is an anti-war statement pure and simple.

I-O-U 1 CENT / "Washington Heads" Die



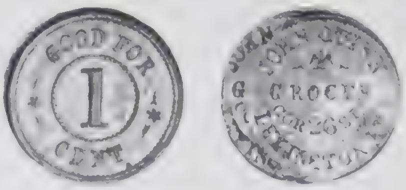
This popular Bridgens die is inscribed I-O-U 1 PURE COPPER CENT. A small portrait of Washington is seen to each side, both facing toward the center. Die 0390 saw only limited use and is known only in combination with 0343, the UNITED STATES COPPER die. Thus, copper metal is mentioned on both sides of the token.

I-O-U 1 CENT / "Goddess Heads" Die



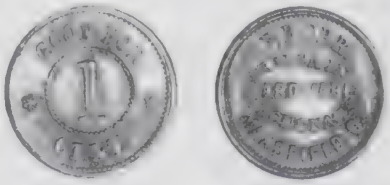
Related to the preceding, this die is quite similar in its concept, except the facing portraits are each of a woman's head. The dentils at the border are *toothlike*, not triangular; thus, this die is an anomaly in the Bridgens repertoire.

GOOD FOR ONE CENT "Spearheads" Die



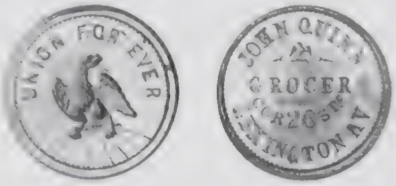
GOOD FOR 1 CENT is the inscription on this die, obviously intended as a currency substitute. A star with spearhead ornaments is at each side.

GOOD FOR ONE CENT "Without Spearheads" Die



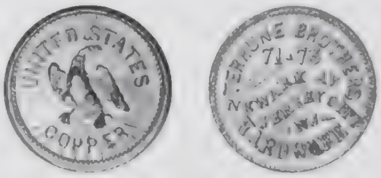
This die is a cousin to the preceding, with GOOD FOR 1 CENT and with a star to each side, but lacking the spearhead ornaments.

UNION FOR EVER Die



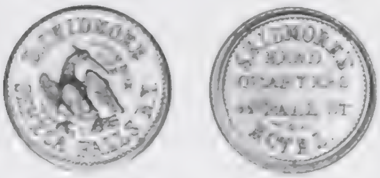
Depicted on this die is an American (presumably) eagle depicted on top of a world globe, with UNION FOR EVER above.

COPPER / UNITED STATES Die



Depicted on this die is an eagle depicted on top of a world globe inscribed COPPER, with UNITED STATES above. Unusual for Bridgens, this die shows an error or mind-change as to the left of the first S (STATES) there is a trace of an earlier letter, possible an E, and a trace of another letter is at the lower right of the first T in the same word.

"Skidmore's Hotel" Die



Custom store card die cut for Skidmore's Head Quarters Hotel, Seneca Falls, NY. At the center is an eagle from Bridgens' hub punch used on other, but with a *cigar* added to the eagle's beak (!) and the nearby inscription in small letters: GOOD FOR ONE. Around the border is D. SKIDMORE / SENECA FALLS, N-Y.

Here we have the centerpiece die to the present "adventure" story.

Bridgens Store Card Die Combinations

To complete the sketch of Bridgens and his dies, the following is a listing of merchants whose advertisements were combined with one or more of the dies listed above (listed alphabetically by state, town, and merchant, in that order):

Illinois, DeKalb. • I.L. Elwood (hardware, tin, stoves)

New Jersey, Elizabeth Port. • John Engel (merchant tailor)

New Jersey, Jersey City • Terhune Brothers (hardware)

New Jersey, Newark • J.L. Agens & Co. (newspapers, cigars, etc.)

New Jersey, Perth Amboy • Coutts & Bro. (dry goods and groceries)

New York, Brooklyn • Braun and Schellworth's Brooklyn Pavilion (entertainment)

New York, Brooklyn • T. Ivory (billiard parlor)

New York, Brooklyn • Daniel Williams (grocer)

New York, Greenpoint • A. Killeen

New York, New York City • James Brennan (dealer in postage stamps for collectors)

New York, New York City • William Bridgens (diecutter, numismatist)

New York, New York City • J. Fisher (cigar store)

New York, New York City • A. Gavron (butcher)

New York, New York City • H.D. Gerdts ("broker and coin dealer")

New York, New York City • J. Mahnken (liquor, cigars)

New York, New York City • George Parsons (fireworks, fancy goods)

New York, New York City • John Quinn (grocer)

New York, New York City • Story & Southworth (grocers)

New York, New York City • William F. Warner (liquor seller)

New York, New York City • Washington Restaurant

New York, Norwich • Weller's News Depot.

New York, Seneca Falls • D. Skidmore's Head Quarters Hotel

New York, Utica • Dickinson Comstock & Co. (druggists and grocers)

New York, Utica • I.J. Knapp (wines and liquors).

Ohio, Mansfield • F.B. Orr (dealer in hardware, iron, and nails)

Pennsylvania, Honesdale, Scranton, and Pittston • Petersen's Jewellers. All three towns are listed on the die.

The Unchronicled *Charles* Bridgens

In *Longworth's American Almanac, New-York Register, and City Directory*, 1834, *Charles* Bridgens is listed as a die sinker at 108 Reade Street, New York City, residing at 177 William Street (a numismatically significant address as in 1863, engraver and Civil War token issuer Emil Sigel's shop was in the same spot!).[1]

Charles Bridgens is virtually unknown in numismatic literature. Quite possibly some pre-Civil War "Bridgens" dies should be attributed to Charles, not to William H. For the time being, the *oeuvre* of Charles Bridgens remains a mystery.

The Skidmore Tokens Today

Returning to Darius Skidmore and his tokens made by William Bridgens, these were probably produced to the extent of many thousands, and saw wide service not only in and around Seneca Falls, New York, but in the entire East and much of the Midwest, at least in "Yankee territory."

Specimens were struck in copper and brass for general circulation and in white metal and silver for the numismatic trade. After Henry Frantz acquired Skidmore's hotel in 1867 he counterstamped certain of the existing tokens with the inscription "H. FRANTZ."

Today, the copper impressions of Skidmore's token are highly collectible and can be obtained without difficulty. Among Civil War token collectors the motif has been a long-standing favorite. Brass strikings are rare. The impressions in white metal and silver are hardly ever seen, and the same can be said for examples with the "H. FRANTZ" counterstamp.

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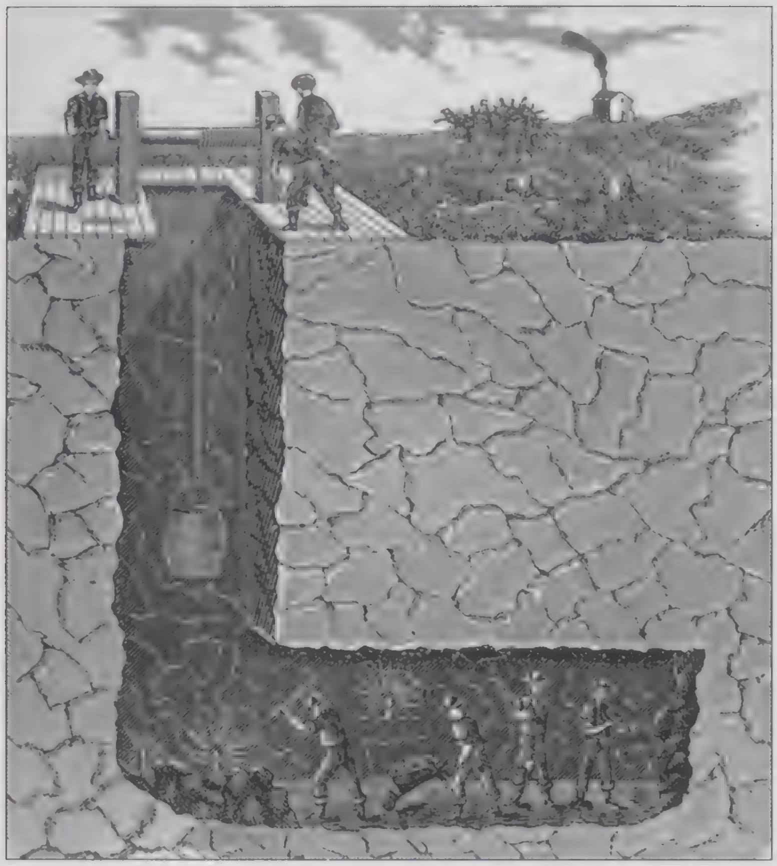
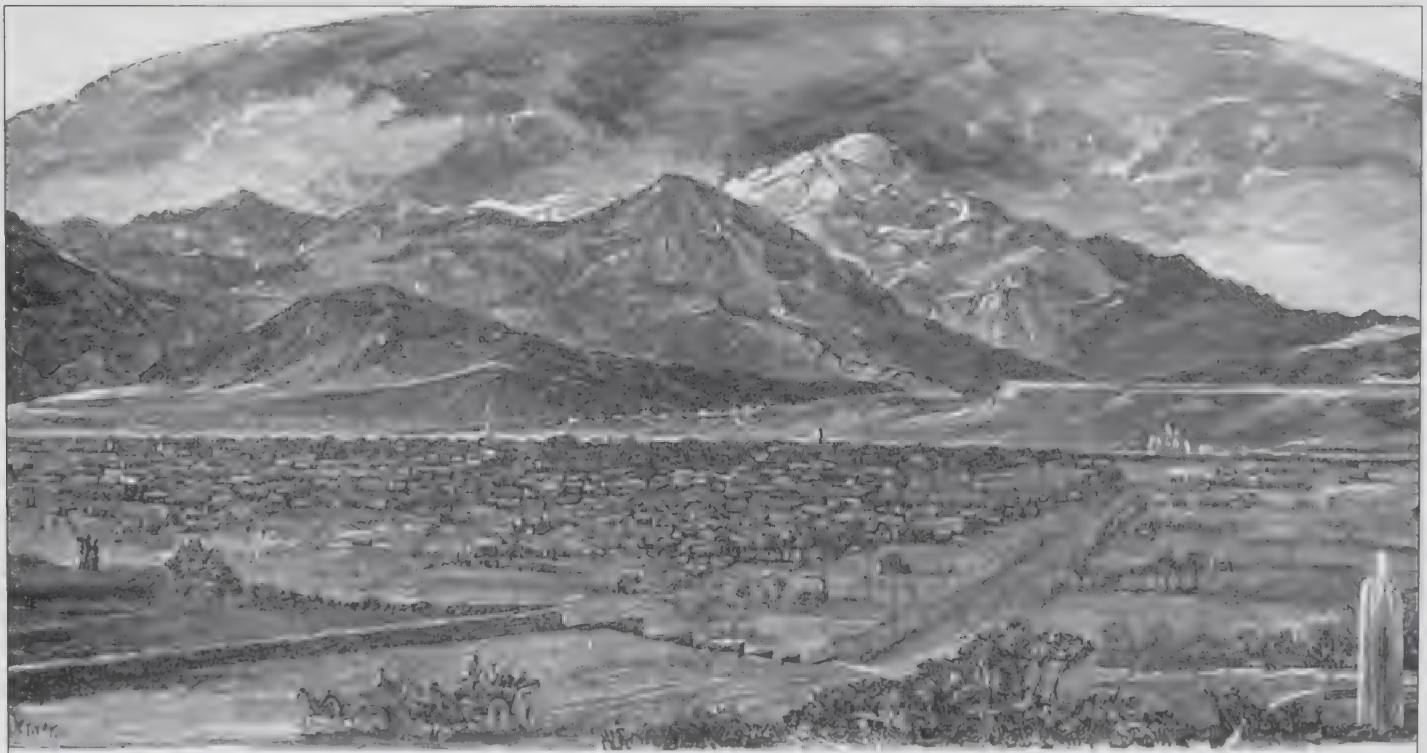
[1] However, Sigel does not appear at any address in the 1834 directory.



Typical gold mining procedure in Colorado, with workers underground in a productive vein, with a winch connecting to the surface. Most gold extraction in the district was by hard-rock mining, but in some areas placer mining—washing gold from streams, California style—was done. (*Colorado: Its Gold and Silver Mines,* Frank Fossett, 1879)

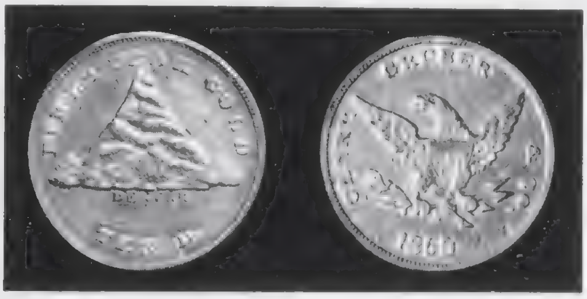


Pikes Peak in the distance, topped with snow, as seen to the west with Colorado Springs in the foreground. When viewed from different perspectives the mountain has various profiles, none of which even closely approximate that shown on the 1860 Clark, Gruber & Co. $10 gold coin. It is presumed that the dies were made in the East by a skilled engraver who was not familiar with the natural form of Pikes Peak. (*Colorado: Its Gold and Silver Mines,* Frank Fossett, 1879)

ADVENTURE NO. 11

THE 1860 CLARK, GRUBER & CO. PIKES PEAK $10

Rocky Mountain Gold — Pikes Peak Motif



The 1860 $10 gold coin issued in Denver by Clark, Gruber & Co., and a $20 of the same year depict what is described as "Pikes Peak," although it does not resemble the form of that summit in nature. Such coins circulated widely in the Colorado district for years thereafter.

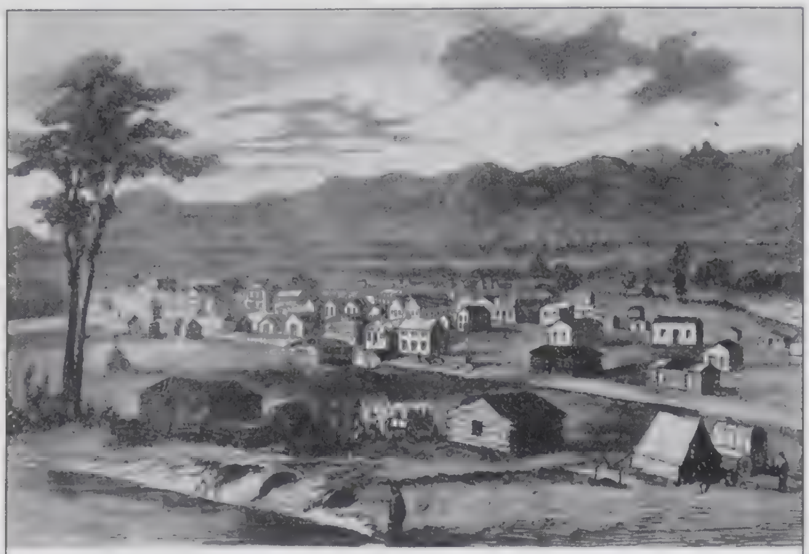
The $10 denomination was the first gold coin produced by this firm, which would go on to achieve a high reputation in the "PIKES PEAK OR BUST" boom days of gold hunting in the Rockies.

An Early News Account

In contrast with the various tokens of William Bridgens, most of which are inexpensive, this "adventure coin" is quite elusive and expensive. However, as several dozen or more exist, if you can afford one, a few appear on the market each year, and such a coin is a dramatic link with history. The story goes back to a wild search for precious metal that started a decade after the better-known California Gold Rush.

The Rocky Mountain News, July 25, 1860, described the Clark, Gruber & Co. minting facility and its mintage of $10 coins:

> [Upon] invitation we forthwith repaired to the elegant banking house of the firm…and were admitted to their coining room in the basement, where we found preparations almost complete for the issue of Pikes Peak coin. A hundred "blanks" had been prepared, weight and fineness tested, and last manipulation gone through with prior to their passage through the stamping press. The little engine that drives the machinery was fired up, belts adjusted, and between 3 and 4 o'clock the machinery was put in motion and "mint drops," of the value of $10 each began dropping into a tin pail with the most musical "clink." About $1,000 were turned out, at the rate of fifteen or twenty coins a minute, which was deemed satisfactory for the first equipment. The coins—of which none but $10 pieces are yet coined—are seventeen grains heavier than the United States coin of the same denomination.
>
> On the face is a representation of the Peak, its base surrounded by a forest of timber, and "Pikes Peak Gold" encircling the summit. Immediately under its base is the word "Denver" and beneath it "Ten D." On the reverse is the American eagle, encircled by the name of the firm "Clark, Gruber & Co.," and beneath it the date, "1860."
>
> The coin has a little of the roughness peculiar to newness, but is upon the whole, very credible in appearance, and a vast improvement over "dust" as a circulating medium.



The town of Auraria, which became a district of Denver, as it appeared in the summer of 1859. The Colorado gold rush had just begun. (*New York Illustrated News,* August 12, 1862, there used to illustrate a town in *Minnesota,* as part of a story on an Indian massacre; completely irrelevant to Colorado! Later reprinted in the *History of Colorado,* Wilbur Fisk Stone, 1918)

Getting There

In 1859 America was agog with the news that gold had been discovered in the Rocky Mountains near present-day Denver. Those who had missed being a Forty-Niner in the California Gold Rush did not want to be left behind this time. Long lines of Conestoga wagons emblazoned "PIKES PEAK OR BUST" headed toward the setting sun, to the district generally known as "western Kansas."

Similar to the migration overland to California a decade earlier, many gold seekers encountered trials and tribulations. This following is from a young Irishman, William J. King, and was written from Lawrence, Kansas, August 28, 1859, to his father in Ireland:[1]

> I have just returned from the gold mines of Western Kansas, in good health and spirits. It is now a fixed fact that these mines are as rich as those in California. I intend returning to the mines again with a stock of goods about the first of next April; and I have every faith that it will pay me well there next summer.
>
> I made about enough money to pay my expenses out to the mines and back to Lawrence, and have got a good mining claim which I think will pay me ten dollars per day, next summer. There are about twenty thousand persons there already, and nearly all are doing well, while the emigration next summer will be large.
>
> I wrote to you that I had started to the gold country with three others on horseback; and I assure you we had a hard trip of it. On the route which we went we had to travel about six hundred miles over a barren desert, without any road to travel on, and nothing but our compass to guide us. We encountered a great many snow storms, which delayed us so long on the way, that our provisions gave out, and we lived for four days without tasting food, and three days at one time without any water. There had been at least twenty persons starved to death on that route, and I know of one person who was so insane from hunger that he ate portions of two of his own brothers after they had died, while a great many others devoured snakes, roots, etc. So you may guess how we had rather a bad time of it. But it was all occasioned by our starting to the mines too early in the season.
>
> We had a very valuable setter dog along with us; and when we had lived three days without eating, it was determined by the balance of the company to kill the dog and feed upon him. I begged so hard to let him live one day longer that his life was spared for a single day. Before that time was passed, we reached Bent's Fort, where we were supplied with plenty of food; and here we remained a week at recruit our exhausted bodies.
>
> The balance of the way to the mines, two hundred miles, was pleasant, as we had a road to travel on and a quantity of provisions with us.

Rocky Mountain Minters

Business opportunities for new arrivals in the Pikes Peak gold district were aplenty, and among those seizing the reins were the principals of Clark, Gruber & Co., Leavenworth, Kansas bankers. Believing that a bank could be profitable, and also that there was money to be made in converting gold dust to coins, the firm established a branch in Denver, in the eastern shadow of the Front Range of the Rockies—not far from the scenes of gold recovery.

Partners were Austin M. Clark, Milton Edward Clark, and Emanuel Henry Gruber.[2] Framework for the minting business was begun in December 1859 when Milton E. Clark journeyed to New York and Philadelphia to make arrangements in person to acquire coining and metal processing machinery. It is believed that Bailey & Co., Philadelphia jewelers, made arrangements for the dies, possibly enlisting the services of Chief Engraver

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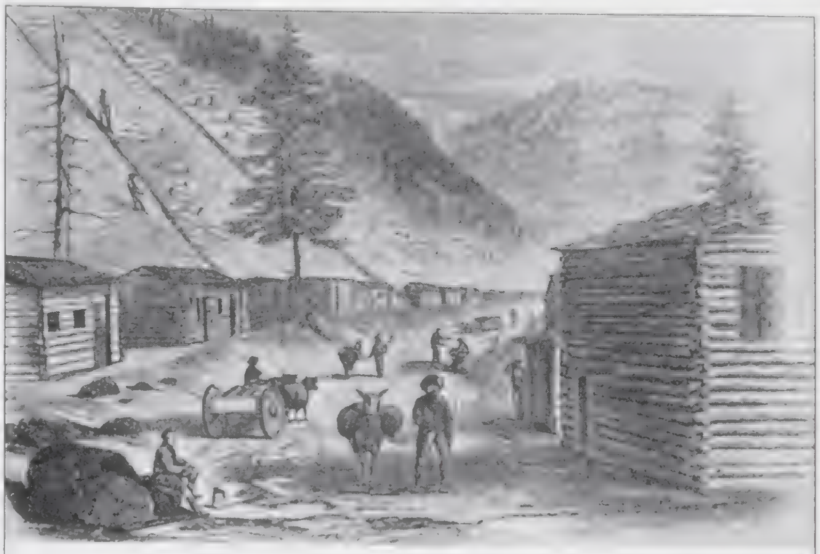
[1] *Historical Magazine,* November 1867, p. 181. Contribution sent by Charles Edwards, a New York reader who owned the letter.

[2] Austin M. Clark was born the son of John and Eleanor Clark in Brown County, Ohio, on October 14, 1824. Milton Edward Clark was born on May 6, 1827, in the same area. Austin lived until 1877, and Milton's life span ended in 1904. Emanuel Henry Gruber was born in Hagerstown, Maryland, March 25, 1833.

James B. Longacre at the Mint, or one or another of the engravers in the same city (Francis Key, William Key, Anthony Paquet, and Peter Jacobus II are among a list of talented artisans in this field).

The workmanship of the dies differs from one to another, and it is believed by the writer than more than one engraver was involved. The 1860 Pikes Peak gold $10, the subject of this sketch, is from finely-made dies, while certain other dies, especially of the smaller denomination Liberty Head coins, appear as if they were a rejected experiment in a class for Engraving 101. Of course, in numismatics, the more crude, the more rustic, the more naïve the diecutting appears, the more interest it has to collectors. Call such pieces "numismatic folk art" if you will.



Gregory's Gulch, Gilpin County, Colorado, during the rush for gold in the Rocky Mountains to the west of Denver. (*Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly*, March 24, 1860. Later reprinted in the *History of Colorado*, Wilbur Fisk Stone, 1918)

In the spring of 1860 Austin Clark and Emanuel H. Gruber arrived in Denver and purchased several lots on the northwest corner of McGaa and F Streets, later to become Market and 16th streets. An imposing two-story brick structure with a stone basement was set up. In April the machinery arrived by ox-drawn wagon. By July 16th the building was complete inside and out, and coinage operations were ready to begin.

In the meantime, the town of Denver continued to grow:[1]

> Clark, Gruber & Co. founded the Denver mint, as a private institution, in May 1860.... The original proprietors found it profitable, at that early day, not only to refine but to coin gold and silver....
>
> The month of May was also marked by immense immigration, the arrivals numbering nearly one thousand daily, together with supplies of all kinds and mills for treating ores. The city grew apace throughout May and June, but the latter month passed without any exciting incidents. The Fourth of July, however, was celebrated in fine style, with artillery salute, procession, the inevitable toasts and speeches, a flag presentation, and dancing to crown the day's enjoyment.

The Rocky Mountain News, whose July 25, 1860, report on the minting of "Pikes Peak" $10 coins has already been quoted, noted this on August 29th:

> Clark Gruber & Co. melted and coined about $18,000 in $10, $5, and $2.50 pieces. As specimens of coinage these pieces are far superior to any of the private mint drops issued in San Francisco, and are nearly as perfect as the regular United States Mint issues.
>
> The faces of the $5s and $2.50s are a good imitation of the government coinage—the stars, with the name of "Clark & Co." occupying the head tiara. The reverse is occupied, of course, with "our noble bird" encircled by the words "Pikes Peak Gold, Denver 2-$^{1}/_{2}$." Altogether it is a creditable piece of work, and we hope to see hosts of it in circulation before the snow flies.
>
> The fineness of this coin is 828$^{1}/_{2}$ and the excess of weight over U.S. coin is 23 grains in a $10 piece. The value in gold is the same as government coin of like denomination, with an additional value in silver alloy equal to near 1%. Deduct the cost of coining at the U.S. mint, about $^{1}/_{2}$ %, and the actual worth of Clark & Co.'s coin is $^{1}/_{2}$% more than any other coinage.

Sleeping in the Mint

In 1860 Rev. Alexander T. Rankin came to Denver. Two of his letters written in August tell of Clark, Gruber & Co.[2] The first is to his niece:

> Denver City, K.T., Aug. 10, 1860
> Mrs. Kelly
>
> ...My bed consists of three blankets, one to spread under me & two to cover. When the weather becomes colder I will buy a buffalo robe which will be sufficient in this climate to make me comfortable in coldest nights.

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[1] W.B. Vickers (and others; an anthology), *History of the City of Denver, Arapahoe County, and Colorado*, Chicago, O.L. Baskin & Co., 1880, p. 196. • Note: Clark, Gruber & Co. never coined silver (but did use the metal as part of alloy).

[2] Noley Mumey, *Colorado Territorial Scrip; their history and biographies of the men who issued them*, 1966, pp. 42-44. Mumey, a medical doctor, loved Colorado history and published many different monograph-length studies on subjects that interested him, usually issued in limited editions. The writer corresponded with him at the time.

> Though this is a *largish* town, rooms are scarce & rents enormous. I am staying for the present in Messrs. Clark's bank. Their father & mother were members of my church, & my best friends, when I was first settled in the ministry near Cincinnati, Ohio. Then they were little boys, now they are men doing business upon a large scale, have built a fine banking house here, have a mint, are coining money, not United States coin, but their own private coin, & are buying gold dust at the rate of from 1,000 to 1,500 per day.
>
> When night comes I unroll my bed on the floor, lie down, and sleep as happily as a prince....

And this letter to his wife:

> Denver City, K.T., Aug. 13 / 60
>
> My dear wife,
>
> ...There are five banking institutions here all buying dust the one in which I am staying buys from 1,000 to 1,500 per day & coins from six to ten thousand per week. Vast quantities are carried East, & dust is the principal currency. Every business man has his gold scales & can weigh any sum from a penny-weight to 16 ounces....

Snowden's Commentary

In his 1860 *Annual Report,* Mint Director James Ross Snowden took notice of the upstart private mint in Denver which, seemingly, was mounting some competition to the federal facilities in Philadelphia and elsewhere:

> In the gold producing region of Kansas, namely at Denver City, a private minting establishment has been set in operation by Messrs. Clark, Gruber & Co., from which pieces of ten and five dollars are issued. They are of various grades of fineness; our assays [conducted at Philadelphia] show them to be from 815 to 838 thousandths, and the pieces are evidently made direct from native gold with its silver alloy, without any attempt to fix or maintain any exact standard. The weight is greater than in corresponding pieces of the national coinage in order to make up for the deficiency of fineness. The 10-dollar pieces vary from 273 to 283½ grains.
>
> On the average, and adding the value of the silver alloy, and deducting the mint charges, the pieces are found to be of professed value, or slightly over.[1] The devices on the 10-dollar pieces are appropriate and distinctive;[2] but on the five dollar piece they are made in close imitation of the legal coin, a reprehensible and illegal practice, countenanced by previous similar emissions in California."

Later Events

By October 1860 the coins were in wide circulation throughout the "Jefferson Territory," as the district was then called for a time, before Colorado Territory became standard (statehood was achieved in 1876). The mint operated both day and night, and by October $120,000 worth of gold coins had been struck.

Toward the end of 1860 Clark, Gruber & Co. opened a branch office in Central City, Colorado. At the time, Central City, and its neighbor, Black Hawk, were among the most active gold mining areas.

Although the $10 and $20 pieces of 1860 were of the Pikes Peak motif, apparently it was felt that an imitation of the head of Miss Liberty as used on federal coins would be more satisfactory, and all 1861 coins were made in that format. Gold content of the Clark, Gruber & Co. coins was increased to 1% more than that used by the United States government mints.

The *Colorado Republican and Rocky Mountain Herald* wrote on August 3, 1861, of a visit to the coining establishment, by which time the "Pikes Peak" motif had been completely replaced by the Liberty Head coins:

> We yesterday stepped into the fine banking house of Messrs. Clark, Gruber & Co. and by invitation of the gentlemanly proprietors took a look at the machinery and fixtures for minting....
>
> The gold is first refined by chemicals, then put into a crucible, melted, and run into bars. Then it is run through a rolling machine, which reduces it to the proper thickness; it is then taken to a punching machine where it is cut in the proper size; a man then takes it and reduces it to the proper weight, when it is taken to the die and stamped, then the edges are milled, which is the finishing stroke.

Sale of the Mint

Notwithstanding the highly successful coinage efforts of Clark, Gruber & Co, the citizens of Colorado Territory, nearly 30,000 in number, desired to have an official United States branch mint to provide a greater quantity of coins for circulation and to act as a depository for bullion. On December 19, 1861, a bill to this effect was introduced in Congress by Hiram P. Bennett.

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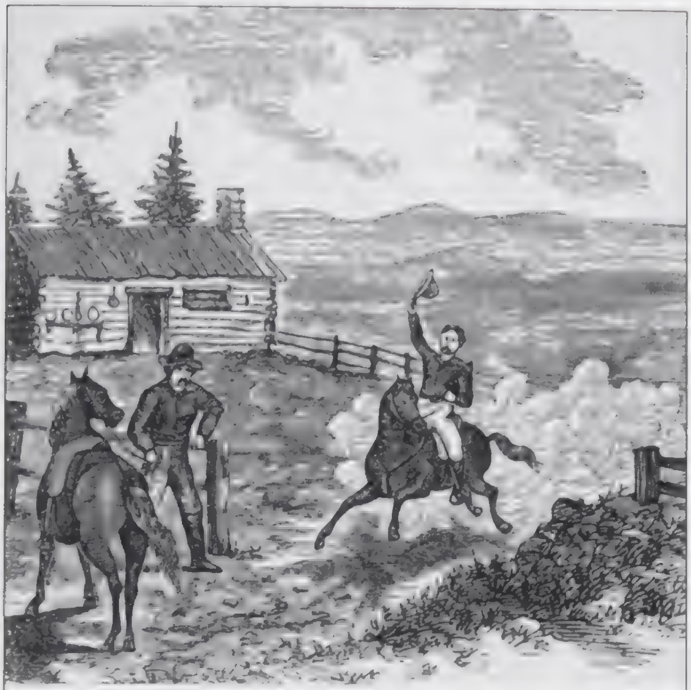
[1] This statement seems to be in direct opposition to a previous comment by a government representative (but in the context of California gold). In reply to the assertion by Dubosq & Co., of San Francisco, that its $5 and $10 gold coins, assayed at $4.96 and $9.94 gold content by the Philadelphia Mint, were, in fact, worth more because of their added silver content, United States Assayer Augustus Humbert replied: "I further beg leave to refer you to the following extracts from the *Manual of Coins and Bullion,* issued by the Assay Office of the United States Mint at Philadelphia, December, 1849: 'Silver considered merely as an alloy of gold coins, except that it can be profitably parted out, goes for no more than copper in the same predicament.'"

[2] A fanciful depiction of Pikes Peak as a volcanic cone, not at all true to nature; this motif was used on the $10 and $20 coins of 1860, the latter denomination not being mentioned in the Annual Report.



The route of the Pony Express mail service commenced in the West in 1860, in the same year that Clark, Gruber & Co. struck its first gold coins, and included the interests of the owners of the Pikes Peak Stage Line.

The Pony Express started on April 3, 1860, connecting St. Joseph, Missouri, with San Francisco. On noon of the inaugural day, riders were dispatched from each end of the line. The average time expended by riders during the next year and a half of operation was about nine days per trip. This reduced the transmission of news from New York to San Francisco to the same short time, utilizing instantaneous telegraph to St. Joseph, then by horse and rider overland by Pony Express to San Francisco. On April 14 the first Pony Express mail arrived in San Francisco, connecting by river steamer from Sacramento aboard the *S.S. Antelope*. The town staged a joyous celebration. (*Colorado: Its Gold and Silver Mines*, Frank Fossett, 1879)

The legislation passed the House and Senate and became effective on April 21, 1862. By this time the owners of Clark, Gruber & Co., having minted gold coins in the total amount of $594,305, desired to sell the building and related facilities.

A description of the firm's assets was provided:[1]

> The private mint in Denver owned by Clark, Gruber & Co. is a two-story brick building 25 feet front by 40 feet deep with a basement opening out on level ground at the back end of the building. Walls of basement story 2 feet thick; 2 floor 16 inches [referring to the thickness of the walls]; 3 floor 12 inches; upper story 4 rooms plastered 11 feet high. 2 story level with the street in front 13 feet high plastered and painted open front.
>
> Glass 30 x 40 in transepts lights above doors. 4 double doors in front, side doors and stairs back leading up to 3 story. Partition 10 feet from back wall. A well furnished circular oak counter and 4 desks of like quality; door and stairs leading down to basement. Basement room contains the machinery and apparatus for coining. Basement 9 feet high with large double doors in rear end and 4 windows plastered.
>
> Engine house 16 x 20 feet, brick. 3 doors and windows. Acid room adjoining 8x20, with 1 door and window. 7 acid furnaces built in the outer wall; flues of same 25 feet high, flues and furnaces 12 to 14 inches square. Melting furnaces are 3 x 4 feet outside, 16 inches square inside, 18 inches deep, iron bars for grates. All the rooms and apartments fitted up with the necessary furniture. The rolling, milling, punching, and coining machinery may all be run at the same time.
>
> All is in perfect working order and good machinery made by the best workmen in Philadelphia and New York ready for working United States coin by substituting United States dies.
>
> Lot on which building stands is 15x125 feet enclosed by board fence 8 feet high. Good well supplying ample water for all purposes.

Appended was a list of machinery, including a pair of 6-inch rollers, a coining press, a milling machine, punching press, two melting furnaces, six acid furnaces, one cupel furnace, one steam engine of 8 to 10 horsepower and fixtures, one pair of level shears, 450 crucibles, and various accessories and supplies. It was stated that the capacity for coining at a 10-hour-per-day rate would be $120,000 value in double eagles, $60,000 value in eagles, $30,000 value in half eagles, and $15,000 in quarter eagles. "This is the speed at which it is ordinarily run; but double that amount may be coined in the same time if desired."

Evaluation of the Clark, Gruber & Co. offer took a long time. On the evening of August 18, 1862, about 300 people, irritated with the delay, gathered at a meeting to discuss the problem. The government was urged to act promptly. On November 25, 1862, the secretary of the Treasury offered $25,000 for the building and its contents. Congress on March 3, 1863, passed a resolution which enabled the secretary of the Treasury to obtain title to the mint. Actual government possession took place in April of the same year.

Clark, Gruber & Co. vacated the premises in May and moved to a building adjacent to Warren Hussey's Bank on F Street. By that time the firm had discontinued making coins. It was intended to begin coinage in Denver right away, but this was not accomplished. However, the facility was known in government records as the Denver Mint, despite the fact that the coining presses remained immobile.

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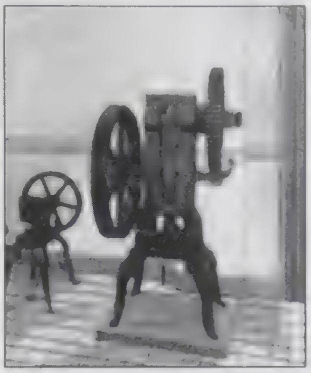
[1] Copy furnished to the author by James F. Ruddy.

E.H. Gruber Remembers

An interview with Emanuel Henry Gruber, then 71 years of age and a resident of Cripple Creek, Colorado, appeared in the *Denver Times* in 1904 and gave information concerning the firm's beginning and subsequent operations. Some of the details are slightly incorrect, but the flavor of the enterprise is well related:



Original coining press used to strike the 1860 Clark, Gruber & Co. $10 "Pikes Peak" gold coins, now on exhibit at the museum of the State Historical Society of Colorado, Denver. (Illustration courtesy of Mark Borckardt)

> My firm was one of the heaviest purchasers of gold dust in the early days. When we bought a large quantity of dust we had to ship it to the states to have it coined into money. This was a rather expensive proceeding, as there were only stage coaches and pony express reaching the city in those days, and we had to pay 5% of the value of the dust as an insurance against loss in transit and another 5% expressage. Our dust was out of our hands anywhere from three weeks to three months, and often times the cash we would have in transit would total nearly $300,000. This was considerable money to have and yet not be able to use for a month at a time, so one day the idea struck me that the firm of Clark, Gruber & Co., bankers, should also be coiners.
>
> I spoke to one of my partners, Austin M. Clark, who with his brother, Milton E. Clark, was interested in all my enterprises in those days, about the matter. He was a lawyer, and after spending several days looking up the authorities, he gave it as his opinion that there was no law of the United States which could be construed as against the coining of money by individuals, provided it was made of full weight. Not entirely satisfied, I consulted two of the most prominent attorneys in the state of Kansas on this matter, and their opinion was the same as that of my partner.
>
> We went ahead then and ordered the machinery required in the coining of gold, and in 1860 built the old mint building, which still stands at the corner of 16th and Market streets, and having installed our machinery set to work to turn the dust of the miners into coin of our company. Our gold differed little from those of Uncle Sam. We had the Goddess of Liberty on the face of them, but in the fillet that bound her hair, instead of the word "Liberty," we placed the word "Pikes Peak" and on the obverse side, instead of the words, "United States of America," we stamped "Clark Gruber & Co."
>
> In this year we coined only $10 and $20 pieces [also $2½ and $5]. We made them of virgin dust, without any alloy, they were really worth more than those of the government, which were alloyed.
>
> The next year we coined $2.50, $5, $10, and $20 gold pieces, but having found our pieces of the preceding year a little soft, as they were pure gold, we did not make the coins of 1861 as pure as those of 1860; still they were purer than the government coin.
>
> In 1862 we did not coin very much money, as the conditions were changed and the government greenbacks did not fluctuate as they did in the first years of the war. Instead of putting the dust into coins this year we molded it into small bars, which we stamped with our firm's stamp, giving the value in ounces and its cash value. These ingots were accepted all over the world at their stamped value, some of them finding their way to Europe and even Australia. When Horace Greeley came west in the early 60s, he visited our mint and, seeing the gold ingots lying on the counter, sent the following message to his paper in New York: "Colorado is essentially a gold state. In the establishment of Clark, Gruber & Co. I saw immense quantities of gold bars lying on their counters. COME WEST."
>
> In 1863 Uncle Sam bought our machinery and the mint building from us. Besides gold pieces we issued greenbacks for the convenience of the miners, who did not wish to be weighed down with gold coin. These bills were always redeemed at their face value and did not fluctuate as did the government greenback, but were in reality gold notes, having the same value as the yellow metal itself.

A Curious Turn of Events

The aforementioned issue of paper money by Clark, Gruber & Co., which seems to have begun in the summer of 1861, furnishes a curious answer to this question:

"From time to time in American commerce paper money was issued by various private interests ranging from banks, to railroads, to cities and towns, to factories. Can you name an issuer of paper money whose notes in 1862 were worth *more* than those issued by the Treasury Department?"

Before explaining the answer, I reproduce an advertisement from *The Rocky Mountain News*, August 3, 1861:

> We have seen a beautifully engraved bank note of the $5 denomination gotten up for Clark, Gruber & Co. of this city, designed for circulation in this Territory. Ones, twos, and threes are also to be issued. They are redeemable in Clark, Gruber & Co.'s coin in this city. The bill which we say has on the lower right hand corner an admirable likeness of Gov. Gilpin—which of itself ought to give currency to the issue.

Whether $1, $2, and $3 notes were issued with a Denver imprint is not known today, as the only survivors are $5 notes bearing the imprint of the American Bank Note Co., New York.[1] The central vignette or illustration depicts a plainsman shooting a buffalo.

The answer, as you might have surmised, is that $5 notes of Clark, Gruber & Co. were worth more in 1862 than were Uncle Sam's $5 Legal Tender bills. Why? Because Clark, Gruber & Co. notes were redeemable for face value *in gold coins*, while federal notes could not be redeemed at par! The Treasury Department attached a stiff premium for anyone wanting gold coins.

1864 *Mint Report*

The *Annual Report of the Director of the Mint*, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1864, included this:

> The Branch Mint at Denver, Colorado Territory, during the past year has been successfully engaged in melting, refining, assaying, and stamping gold bullion, returning the same to the depositor in the form unparted bars, bearing the government stamp of weight and fineness. The number of bars stamped was 532 amounting in value to $486,329.97.
>
> The efficiency and usefulness of this branch would be greatly increased if a safe and expeditious mode of transportation could be secured. An overland route of 600 miles is a formidable obstacle in the way of commercial intercourse with our eastern cities and markets. In addition, the hostility of the Indian tribes along the route, doubtless instigated by rebel [Confederate] emissaries and bad white men, has increased the difficulty and dangers of intercommunication and the transportation of bullion to the Atlantic markets. These difficulties will probably be obviated in due time, and that institution will then assume her proper position as a branch mint.

Clark, Gruber & Co. in Later Years

On March 10, 1864, Emanuel Henry Gruber withdrew from Clark, Gruber & Co. The Clark brothers continued under the name of Clark & Co. until May 9, 1865, when the business was transferred to the First National Bank in Denver, an organization of which the Clarks were founders and stockholders.

The Central City branch was sold to George T. Clark, who was first cashier of the First National Bank in Denver, and Evan Smith. The business, which later included a branch at Georgetown, was continued under the name of George T. Clark & Co. Throughout the 1860s the main office of Clark, Gruber & Co. remained in Leavenworth, Kansas. Accounting and financial reports were prepared in the Kansas facility.

Gruber, following his March 10, 1864 resignation, returned to Leavenworth, where he continued in the banking business until 1866. He had business interests in New York and Louisiana as well. In July 1878 he went to Leadville, Colorado, then experiencing a silver boom, and became an owner of the Pendery Mine. A three-story building, the Gruber Block, was erected in Leadville in the summer of 1880 at Harrison Avenue between Fourth and Fifth streets. By August 15th of that year every square foot of space in the facility, then considered to be the best business location in Leadville, was rented.

By the end of 1882, Gruber had suffered some financial reverses in his mining investments. He left Leadville and moved to Gunnison. In July 1883 he relocated to Denver, where he engaged in the selling of mining claims, real estate, and insurance until 1892, when he moved to Cripple Creek. Located on the western side of Pikes Peak, Cripple Creek was a boom town. Gold had been discovered there, and miners, including many from the Central City and Georgetown areas (which were then experiencing a depression, for mining had turned from emphasis on gold to silver, and silver prices were low), came to seek new fortunes. Overnight many people became wealthy, and within a few years the Cripple Creek area had grown to include 60,000 people, including over 30 millionaires. Gruber stayed in the area during its most prosperous times. He left in 1904 because the altitude, about 9,500 above sea level, was unfavorable for his wife's health.

On June 30, 1906, Congress passed an act which provided for the sale of the Clark, Gruber & Co. mint building, which it had owned since March 3, 1863. On August 28, 1906, the high bid of $31,000 offered by Charles Boettcher of Denver was accepted. The new owner tore the building down in September 1907, despite the fact that it was not until August 11, 1909, that the title transfer was finally completed.

In January 1915 in *The Numismatist* an account was printed of the visit of Farran Zerbe to Denver, where he had the opportunity to examine a blank planchet for a $10 Clark, Gruber & Co. coin which had been found by a local assayer in a lot of about 2,000 tons of rubbish on the site of the old Clark, Gruber mint, torn down in 1907. "It is said the assayer made a considerable profit from the contents of the rubbish, and found the planchet among other items. The planchet was reeded, and showed several defects, evidently having been rejected."

---

[1] Noley Mumey, *Colorado Territorial Scrip; their history and biographies of the men who issued them*, 1966, p. 43, illustrates a $1 note of the firm, imprinted Leavenworth, Kansas, and redeemable in "current bank notes" (not coin).

The Federal Mint in Denver

It was not until in February 1906, that coins were actually struck in Denver by the United States government, and that was done not at the Clark, Gruber & Co. plant but at the new Denver Mint. At 10:59 A.M., Thursday, February 1, 1906, Superintendent F.M. Downer gave a signal, and as part of a public ceremony the first official Denver Mint coins were struck. On hand was a crowd who heard commentaries and watched the machinery in motion.[1]

Despite the fact that Denver Mint coins were not made until 1906, several of them can be found listed in auction catalogues of the 1870s and 1880s. In his 1875 sale of the Col. Mendes I. Cohen Collection, Edward Cogan, who had a giant-sized ego and considered himself to be the "father of the coin trade in America" (never mind that several others preceded him in the profession, and that Cogan did not begin until 1858, and then in a small way), offered these "Denver Mint" coins:

> Lot 160: "1838-D [$5 gold] Denver Mint. Very Fine.
>
> Lot 207: "1839-D [$2.50 gold] Denver Mint. Fine and scarce."

Similarly, in the June 1883 sale of the William J. Jenks Collection by John W. Haseltine, we find this curious $5 gold half eagle:

> Lot 376: 1839 Letter D (Denver Mint) between bust and date. Uncirculated and rare." Realized $7.25.

Such errors were not particularly unusual for the era, and others besides Cogan and Haseltine offered "Denver Mint" gold coins. The explanation is that there was virtually nothing in popular print regarding which federal mints were in existence then or earlier, and what mintmarks they were used. Such information was found in the *Annual Report of the Director of the Mint*, but it seems that Cogan, Haseltine, Strobridge (not cited here), and certain others either did not read such reports, or forgot what they had seen.

Years later in 1893 Augustus G. Heaton, in his *Mint Marks* treatise, would relate that he had never met even a single collector who was interested in acquiring mintmark varieties of $2.50, $5, $10, or $20 coins. It is no wonder that leading dealers and others mistook the obscure Georgia mountain town of *Dahlonega* for the well-known city of Denver.

The road to error was facilitated by the listing in *current* Mint reports of the activities of the Denver Mint, which, in fact, had been called that ever since the government took over the coining facilities of Clark, Gruber & Co. in that city in the early 1860s. However, it was easy enough for cataloguers to assume that a coin with a "D" on the reverse was made at Denver, much as Montroville W. Dickeson blithely informed readers in his 1859 master work, *The American Numismatical Manual*, that gold coins bearing a "C" were made in California (instead of Charlotte); the same work told nothing specific about branch mint coins!

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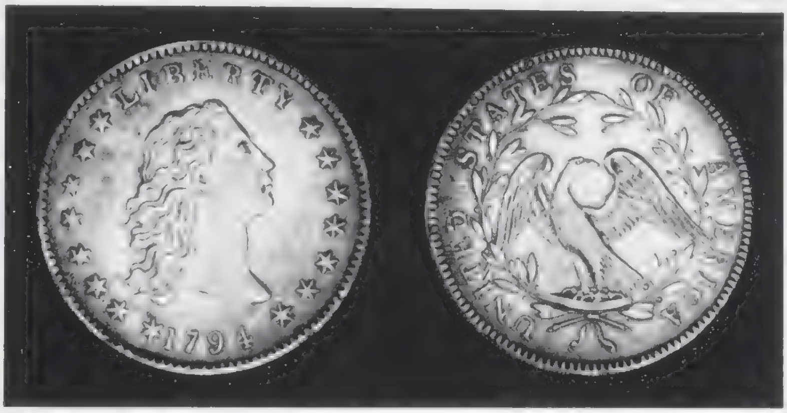
[1] Jacob G. Willson, "Denver Mints," *Numismatic Scrapbook*, June 1940.

THE SOUVENIR PUBLISHING AND MERCANTILE COMPANY, DENVER.
THE U. S. MINT, DENVER.
My dearest

Postcard cancelled on October 20, 1906, and showing the new Denver Mint, which opened earlier in the same year. Until the postal law was changed, effective March 31, 1907, all messages had to be on the *front* of a postcard. (Collection of Mark Borckardt)

ADVENTURE NO. 12

THE CONNOISSEUR-PLEASING DOLLAR OF 1794



For as long as American coins have been collected the 1794 silver dollar has been a landmark, an object of ownership pride. Today, about 125 to 135 exist from a coinage of 1,758 pieces. (Harry W. Bass, Jr. Collection, May 1999, Lot 2021)

Tradition

Ever since the cradle days of numismatics in America in the 1850s, the silver dollar dated 1794 has been an object of admiration, interest, and possession desire. While there were scarce varieties among other dates through 1803, it was the 1794 that attracted the most attention. In the first major book published for collectors, *The American Numismatical Manual*, 1859, Dr. Montroville W. Dickeson sagely observed: "This coin has become exceedingly rare, and fair specimens command a handsome premium." Dickeson's work was exceedingly impressive for its time, and nothing even remotely comparable to its content and format appeared for the rest of the nineteenth century.[1]

During the mid-nineteenth century, sharp-eyed bullion brokers, bank tellers, and others kept a weather eye out for dollars of this date. Over a period of time perhaps 100 or so were found in circulation. To these can be added an estimated 25 to 35 others acquired by numismatists before 1850, primarily by English collectors who sought "crown"-size coins from that late British possession now called the United States. This had fortunate consequences in later decades when England became a rich source for early American coins, and such dealers as E.L. Mason, Jr., S. Hudson Chapman, H.G. Sampson, and Édouard Frossard went on buying trips there. This mother lode of early American coinage continued to be mined through the twentieth century, and significant finds sometimes still occur in our own era, although important new discoveries are few and far between (two notable exceptions being a pair of Mint State 1794 dollars auctioned under the title of the Lord St. Oswald Collection by Christie's in London in 1964).

In the 1860s and 1870s, when rare American coins were discussed at length, chances are good that the 1794 dollar would come in for its share of comment. During the era auction catalogues were often the means by which collectors obtained information, factual or otherwise. There were sufficiently few 1794 dollars that they were considered rare, but enough that they came on the market with some frequency, as chronicled by a midwestern periodical described below.

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[1] In 1988 the author of *Walter Breen's Complete Encyclopedia of U.S. and Colonial Coins* noted that it was, in a way, a successor to the Dickeson study, but now incorporating information and research techniques not utilized in 1859.

An 1876 Survey

The Coin and Stamp Journal, Kansas City, Missouri, January 1876, contained the following:

> RARE AMERICAN COINS: We will endeavor, from the facts within our reach, to show what are our rare American coins, and their value. We do not attempt to give all the sales that have taken place, but only a few in different years. The great differences in prices brought at these sales are not caused so much by the real changes in the value of the coins, as from other circumstances, such as bad weather, numerous sales in succession, and lastly, our present hard times.
>
> THE DOLLAR OF 1794 is the first U.S. silver coin we will notice, and is, with the exception of 1804, the rarest of dollars. At the Mickley sale in 1867, the 1794 dollar brought $75.00. Described, "one of the finest dollars of this date in existence. The impression excellent and condition superb; much finer than one once sold for $285."
>
> At the MacKenzie sale, June 23, 1869, one brought $145. Described, "This dollar is known to many collectors as the one sold in the collection of coins belonging to Mr. Zanoni, of Cincinnati, and is in my estimation the best that has ever been offered at auction, showing less marks of circulation than any other, and very rare in this state of preservation." Another sold at the Fewsmith sale, Oct. 4, 1870, for $25. Described: "Good for date; obverse, head of Liberty bold and good; stars weak; date plain. Reverse, eagle and wreath well preserved; legend weak, extremely rare."
>
> At Cauffman's sale, May 3, 1871, the price was $32. Described: "A better impression of this rare dollar than is usually found, being less injured by circulation than most of those offered at auction."
>
> At a sale in New York, June 1, 1871, the dollar sold for the sum of $5.50. Thus described: "1794 dollar. Had it not been for an imperfection in the planchet, which has partly erased the three first figures in the date, it might have been called very good for this rare date, as in other respects there is not much to find fault with."
>
> Sanford's sale, November 1874. Price procured was $180. Described: "This, in my opinion, is about the best impression that has ever been offered at auction. It is but little circulated and is exceedingly rare in this condition."
>
> Parker's sale, May 5, 1875, only $30. Described: "Rather weak date, head rubbed, altogether fair for this rare piece."
>
> At a Philadelphia sale, Jan. 25, 1875, one sold for $41. Described: "1794. Very good for this rare date; the head on obverse and eagle on reverse unusually bold; very desirable specimen; date all plain."
>
> The one of Col. Cohen's collection, sold in October last, for $125. Described: "A remarkably fine impression of this date, being all but Uncirculated on obverse and reverse, and as fine, if not finer, than the one sold in Mr. Sanford's sale, and extremely rare in this condition."
>
> The last one sold, Col. J.H. Taylor's, November 16th [1875], brought $100. Described: "The best impression from the dollar dies of this date, and on the best planchet that I have ever seen—a remark I have often heard from others since the piece came into my hands. There has been a name engraved on the obverse and burnished out, the effect being observable, though not greatly hurtful; it is a beautiful dollar, and equaled by few. Rare."[1]

Comments from Here and There

Lancaster, Pennsylvania dealer Charles Steigerwalt, in *The Coin Journal,* September 1880, commented concerning the 1794 dollar:

> The number of pieces coined in this year was not large and they have become very rare. Good specimens bringing about 50 dollars. The dies of the dollars and half dollars of this year were not sharp and the impressions are generally weak; good specimens being difficult to obtain.

When Ebenezer Locke Mason wrote *Rare American Coins: Their Description, and Past and Present Fictitious Values,* in 1887, he focused upon this coin:

> The 1794 United States silver dollar, which occupies the centre of the group in our illustration [a col-

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[1] A tentative pedigree listing for the once-engraved McCoy 1794 dollar, prepared by John Kraljevich, Jr., and drawing extensively upon Jack Collins' research plus other sources, is given herewith: W. Eliot Woodward's sale of John F. McCoy collection, May 1864, Lot 338 ($80) – Edward Cogan's sale of the Joseph Zanoni collection, April 1867, Lot 79 ($100) – purchased by "Ten Eyck" according to Jack Collins - Edward Cogan's sale of the Mortimer MacKenzie collection, November 1874, Lot 96 ($180) – William Harvey Strobridge's sale of the James H. Taylor collection, November 1875 (by which time the coin had been burnished, which could have been done years previous. It sold for $100) – New York Coin and Stamp Company's sale of the Lorin Parmelee collection, June 1890, Lot 681 (bought in at $225) – the collection of H.O. Granberg – (displayed at ANS in 1914) — the collection of William H. Woodin – the collection of Waldo C. Newcomer – the collection of Colonel E.H.R. Green – via B.G. Johnson in 1942 to Jerome Kern; Mehl's sale of the Kern collection, May 1950, Lot 770 ($825) – Clint Hester, according to Jack Collins, who based his assertion on Hester's annotated copy of *The World's Greatest Collection of United States Silver Dollars* – the collection of W.G. Baldenhofer – via James Kelly to Alfred J. Ostheimer in 1959 – via Lester Merkin to Catherine Bullowa and other more modern owners. • Kraljevich note: To Collins' pedigrees I have added the appearance in the 1875 Taylor sale, that piece having a description that nearly precludes it being any other specimen (see quoted text above). Cogan never mentioned the name engraved on it, so the name may have or may not have been present in 1867 and 1874. All we know is it WAS there in 1864 (McCoy by Woodward) and NOT there in 1875 (Taylor by Strobridge).

> lage of coins at the top of the page], was authorized by an act of Congress, April 2, 1792, and was struck at the old Mint, opposite Filbert Street, in Seventh Street, Philadelphia, and is still standing.
>
> This dollar, which is considered very rare, commanded a premium of about $25 in 1860, and has steadily advanced in fictitious value from year to year, and commanded, in every condition, in 1885, the sum of three hundred dollars.
>
> It is said that but few of the 1794 dollars were struck, and the earliest from the dies equaled Proof pieces in their glistening splendor. The British Museum contains the best known specimen of the 1794 dollar, and probably received it as a gift from our government the year it was coined.[1]

This appeared in the *American Journal of Numismatics*, April 1887:

> A lovely 1794 dollar stood for two years in the "Bureau de Change" window, Charing Cross Station, London, staring at the British public; the writer could have had it a dozen times at £1. It was finally swept off by Mr. [J. Colvin] Randall on his last visit to the British Isles.[2]

However, by this time the story had already been printed in Ludlow, Roberts & Weller's November 29 to December 2, 1886, auction sale in Birmingham, England, of the E. Shorthouse, Esq., Collection, in a section of the catalogue titled "To American Coin Collectors."

From that point it seems to have been picked up by Charles L. Leal, of Paterson, New Jersey, and used in Vol. 1, No. 5, of his *The American Numismatist*, February 1887; there the date of the appearance of the 1794 dollar in London was given as several decades earlier. How this related to Randall's "last visit" is not known. Quoting Leal:

> Another collector, a resident of London, stated that a magnificent 1794 United States dollar lay in the 'Bureau de Change' window, Charing Cross Station, of that city for two years (1852-3) and he could have had it a dozen times at a pound, but did not purchase. That identical dollar would bring twenty pounds were it offered today.
>
> I saw one sold by Bangs & Co., New York, at $112.50 not more than six years ago. These dollars were struck in the old Mint, opposite Filbert Street, Philadelphia, which building is still standing.

At the turn of the twentieth century, S. Hudson Chapman and Henry Chapman stood in the first rank of the rare coin profession. The pair had worked in the Philadelphia coin shop of John W. Haseltine from about 1876, and they hung out their own shingle as the Chapman brothers, "numismatists and antiquaries," in June 1878.

In February 1903 they catalogued and offered for sale the Elisha Turner and Joseph Hooper Collections, and included this note:

> It may interest collectors when we state that since we began business, in 1876 [as employees of Haseltine], we have never had a 1795 3 leaves, 1796, or 1797 $1/2 or 1794 $1 brought into our office in any lot of old coins submitted to us by the public.
>
> A pretty fair test of the great rarity of these coins, for we have examined thousands of lots.

Robert Scot

The dies for the 1794 dollar are almost certainly the work of Robert Scot, a medalist and die sinker. He had begun his career in England as a watchmaker, and had come to America, where he engaged in engraving plates for money and bills of exchange during the Revolutionary War, scales used in the office of financier Robert Morris, and plates illustrating architectural items for *Dobson's Encyclopedia*, among numerous other commissions. In 1780 he produced the dies or molds for an Indian peace medal, "Happy When United," for the state of Virginia. In 1781 Robert Scot's workshop was located in Philadelphia on the west side of Front Street, near the corner of Vine.

Following the death from yellow fever in the summer of 1793 of Joseph Wright, a talented artist of whom many fine things were expected, the Mint sought to add a full-time engraver to the staff. Wright had worked on and off for the Mint, and today is credited with designing the 1792 eagle-on-globe patterns and the 1793 Liberty Cap cent, both beautiful works of art.

On November 23, 1793, Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, who was in charge of the affairs of the Mint, wrote to Robert Scot and sent him a commission to be engraver at the Mint. To Scot fell the task of cutting the dies for coinage, including the 1794 Flowing Hair dollar. In November 1794, John Smith Gardner was hired as his assistant, but by this time the initial delivery of silver dollars had been accomplished. Probably, Gardner worked on some of the 1795 and later dies.

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[1] In a conversation with the author, August 6, 1992, Jack Collins stated that in the course of his research involving 1794 dollars he had learned that the specimen in the British Museum had been cleaned to the extent that it now shows extensive hairlines. • The late Jack Collins, a fine friend for many years and a consignor to our auction sales (including his reference collection of copper cents), found the 1794 dollar to be of especial interest, and commenced creating a manuscript listing 125 to 135 different specimens, his estimate of the total population. The task was not an easy one, especially as most nineteenth-century auction catalogues lacked illustrations, and pedigrees can be difficult to trace. It is hoped that his manuscript will be published someday.

[2] J. Colvin Randall, was a Philadelphia dealer and in the 1870s an associate of dealer John W. Haseltine, until the two became estranged.

Minting the First Dollars

In 1793 and 1794, the largest press at the Mint was intended for striking no coins larger than a half dollar. Surviving documents indicate that Mint officials lamented the lack of a press suitable for coining silver dollars and medals. It was not until spring 1795 that one was installed.

In the meantime, a screw press suitable for coining cents and half dollars was put into service to make silver dollars. The initial coinage of the new denomination was accomplished in the first part of October 1794. The effort was not completely successful, as evidenced by surviving coins which show areas of weak striking. Apparently, just one blow of the press was used (as evidenced by the lack of double struck features on surviving pieces).

Known silver dollars dated 1794 are from a single pair of dies and are believed to have been made to the extent of, perhaps, 2,000 coins (Walter H. Breen's estimate), of which 1,758 pieces considered to be satisfactory were delivered by the coiner on October 15, 1794. The remaining impressions, possibly amounting to 242 coins, rejected as being too weak, probably were kept on hand for later use as planchets. Supporting this theory is the existence of at least two 1795 silver dollars each plainly overstruck on a 1794 dollar.

The silver for striking these came from ingot deposits made by Mint Director David Rittenhouse and Charles Gilchrist. This is certain, because Rittenhouse personally received all the first coinage of dollars.

The obverse and reverse die faces were not parallel, with the result that on almost all pieces surviving today the lower left obverse side appears weaker than the upper right obverse side, with corresponding weakness and strength on the opposite areas of the reverse. As the die faces remained out of parallel after having been removed from the press for resurfacing and removal of clash marks, and re-inserted in the press, the cause of the maladjustment must have been that the face of one die (or, less likely, both dies) was not perpendicular to its shank.

After the effort at coining dollars, the project was abandoned as a bad job, and a large supply of silver dollar planchets was put into chests for storage until a larger, satisfactory press could be installed. Thus, the mintage of 1794 dollars was much smaller than had been intended.

Often in the affairs of men and the Mint, one situation can have profound effects upon another. As it was not feasible to coin an additional quantity of silver dollars until a new press was on hand, the mantle of the largest silver coin fell upon the half dollar, and in early 1795 large numbers were struck in a proliferation of die combinations (thus providing an especially rich field for numismatic study today). After a new press was on hand, half dollar production fell off sharply (with only a few coined in 1796-7 and none at all from 1798 to 1800), while silver dollar production reached new high levels.

Reception of the 1794 Dollars

So far as is known, the new 1794 silver dollars slipped into circulation and immediately began doing their duty in the channels of commerce. Despite all good intentions, when the first 1794-dated United States silver dollars reached merchants and bankers, and when their successors dated 1795, 1796, etc., did also, the Spanish-American dollars, or eight-reales pieces, were preferred over the native American product.

The old eight-reales coins were worth slightly more on the market than were the sparkling new United States coins with the head of Miss Liberty on one side and an eagle on the other. The reason is that the citizenry was familiar with the eight-reales coins, and especially in the export trade they were welcomed worldwide. Although the new United States dollars might test properly by weight or analysis, most business was done at sight, and the new coins had yet to prove their status. The record shows, for example, that typical trading vessels out of Salem and other East Coast ports were laden with thousands of Spanish-American dollars, but so far the writer has encountered no specific mention of United States dollars being used in the general era 1794-1804.

By early December 1794, a few of the newly minted United States dollars had traveled north to the Granite State, where the *New Hampshire Gazette* reported the following on December 2nd:

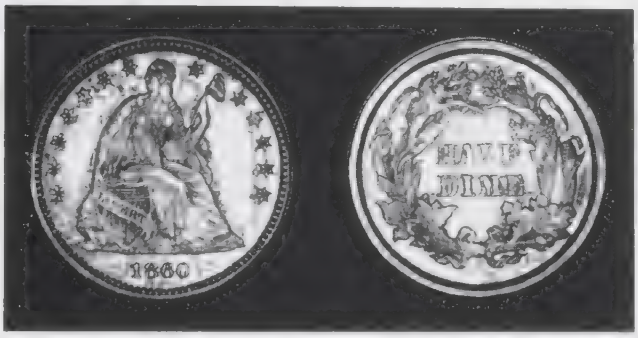
> Some of the dollars now coining at the Mint of the United States have found their way to this town. A correspondent put one into the editor's hands yesterday. Its weight is equal to that of a Spanish dollar, encircled by Fifteen Stars, and has the word 'LIBERTY' at the top, and the date, 1794, at the bottom.
>
> On the reverse, is the Bald Eagle, enclosed in an Olive Branch, round which are the words "One Dollar, or Unit, Hundred Cents." The *tout ensemble* has a pleasing effect to a connoisseur; but the touches of the graver are too delicate, and there is a want of that boldness of execution which is necessary to durability and currency.

We have it on the word of an unnamed editor of a New Hampshire newspaper that the new 1794 United States silver dollar had "a pleasing effect to a connoisseur." What more could be asked for?

ADVENTURE NO. 13

SNOWDEN'S "PET" 1860 HALF DIME

"Stateless" Issue



A representative specimen of this 1860 rarity, an issue seemingly struck expressly for the numismatic trade. (Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr. Collection, 1996, Lot 1010)

Snowden and His Mint

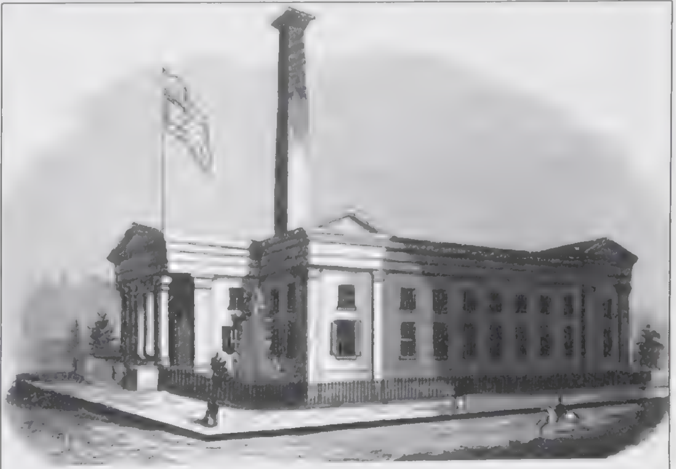
James Ross Snowden became director of the Mint in June 1853. By 1859 he had developed an interest in numismatics, and in the spring of that year became a first-class coin collector, this in regard to his studying the subject and aggressively seeking specimens.

However, Snowden had one advantage denied to most of his fellow numismatists: he could *make* just about any rarity desired! And this he did!

At the time he was busy acquiring tokens and medals depicting George Washington, these to be included in the Washington Cabinet which was completed in time to be dedicated on Washington's birthday, February 22, 1860. Although Snowden openly traded patterns, Proofs, restrikes, and other coins, after spring 1859 the whole matter went "underground," and little information was given out concerning the rarity of items made and how they were distributed.

How Many Were Made?

An exception to this stonewalling of information is provided by the curious "transitional" half dime of



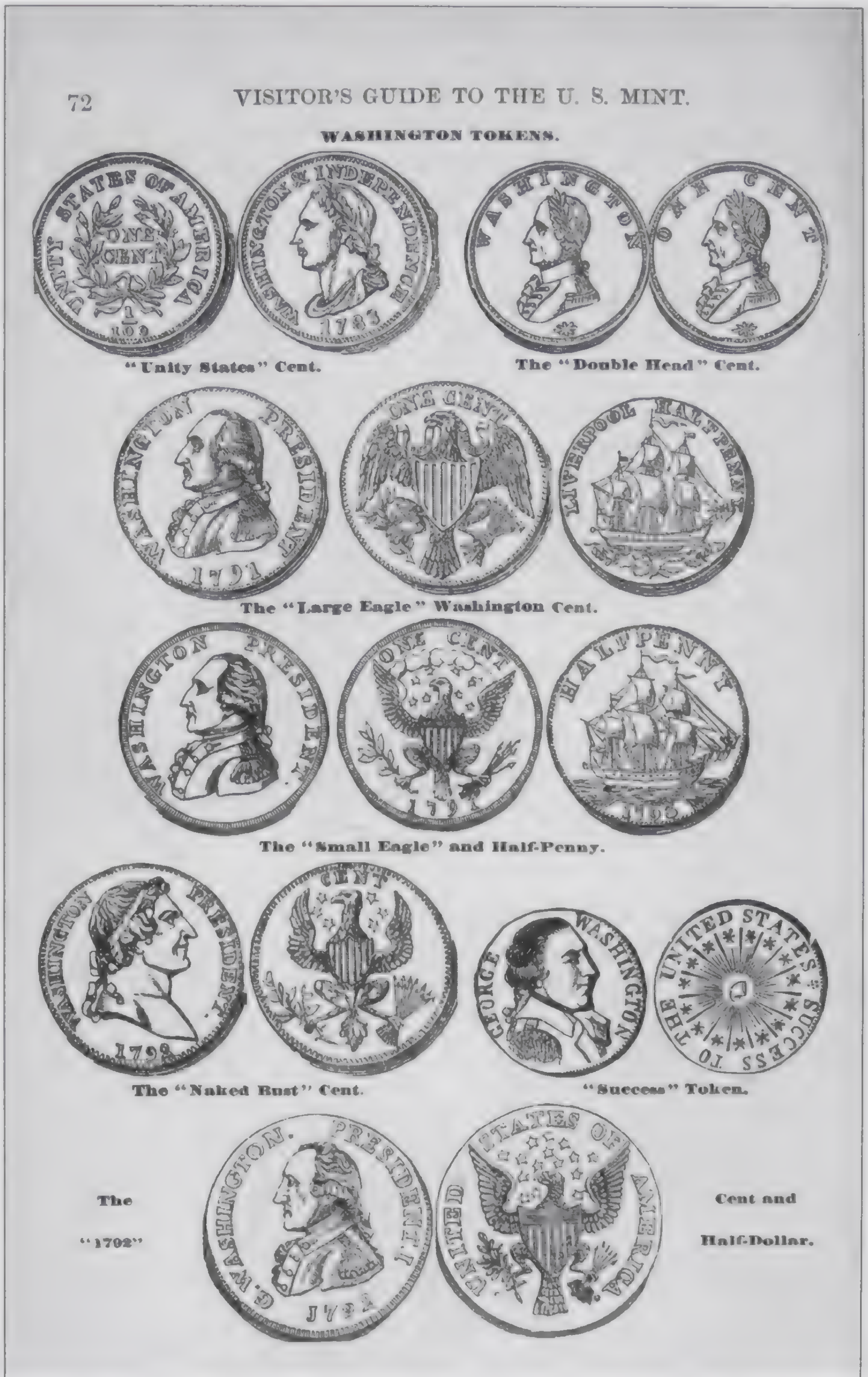
The Philadelphia Mint as it appeared in the nineteenth century. The cornerstone for this building was laid on July 4, 1829, and the premises were occupied in 1833. The structure remained in use until the third Philadelphia Mint was occupied in 1901. Within these walls the entire Liberty Seated silver coinage was effected, including the curious 1860 half dime discussed here. (*Illustrated History of the United States Mint*, published by George G. Evans, 1892)

1860, which for the obverse has the general style used in 1859, with Liberty Seated at the center, stars around, and the date 1860 below. For *regular* coinage, the arrangement had been changed in 1860 to have UNITED STATES OF AMERICA around the obverse, in place of the stars. Thus, Snowden's 1860 transitional was anachronistic.

The reverse of the 1860 transitional had a large wreath and the inscription HALF DIME. There was no mention anywhere on the coin as to its country of origin, thus it was a "stateless" coin.

In 1860 Snowden was perfectly willing to reveal the mintage quantity, and published the information that just 100 of these pieces had been struck. No clues were given as to how they might be obtained, but already they were scarce. However, it was likely that certain collectors and dealers, especially William K. Idler, a local trader in coins and curios, might have some available for a price. Early in the year 1858, Idler had opened a curiosity shop at 111 North 9th Street, and by 1860 seems to have been an outlet for Mint rarities.[1]

Were only 100 made? We can never know, for whatever character attributes James Ross Snowden may have had, veracity was not among them. No matter. Today, the coin is rare, highly prized, and when one appears on the market it receives eager competition for its acquisition.



72 VISITOR'S GUIDE TO THE U. S. MINT.

WASHINGTON TOKENS.

"Unity States" Cent.

The "Double Head" Cent.

The "Large Eagle" Washington Cent.

The "Small Eagle" and Half-Penny.

The "Naked Bust" Cent.

"Success" Token.

The "1792" Cent and Half-Dollar.

Washington tokens and coins from the Mint Cabinet. Early in 1859 there were only three such pieces on hand, but after Director James Ross Snowden began collecting them with vigor, an entire exhibit was mounted of this specialty. In 1861 Snowden wrote a book on the subject. (*Visitors' Guide and History of the U.S. Mint, Philadelphia*, A.M. Smith, 1885)

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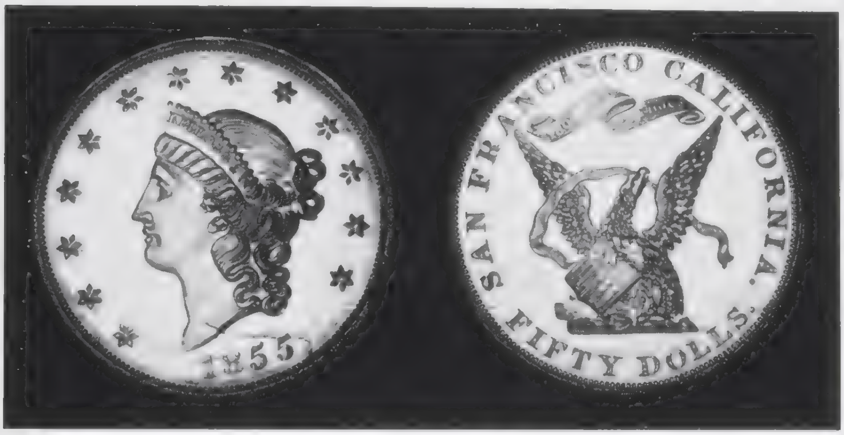
[1] In 1859 Idler had Robert Lovett cut several dies and strike tokens advertising his business, including one die inscribed: W. IDLER / DEALER IN / COINS, / MINERALS, SHELLS / ANTIQUES &c / 111 No. 9th St. / PHILADA, and another inscribed: CONTINENTAL / PAPER / MONEY / AUTOGRAPHS / ENGRAVINGS / &c. / BOUGHT & SOLD / W. IDLER 111 N. 9th St. These are highly collectible today.

ADVENTURE NO. 14

THE "KING OF TERRITORIAL GOLD"

The Kellogg & Co. 1855 $50



It is not known how many Kellogg & Co. 1855 $50 gold coins were made, but fewer than a dozen originals are known today. Historian Don Kagin has called the issue the "King of Territorial Gold." The example shown here is one of the original rarities.

* * *

The Original 1855 Kellogg & Co. $50 Coins

The round 1855 Kellogg & Co. $50 is one of the great high points among California gold coins and has a fame reached by few other pieces in the series. In his reference work on the subject, Don Kagin noted: "This is one of the most popular private gold pieces and is called the 'King of Territorial Gold,' as it is considered to be one of the most beautiful of the private gold series."

It is believed that only 11 different specimens exist. Most of these have been known for a long time and were probably originally made as presentation pieces for directors, shareholders, and other interested parties. It represents the capstone of the Kellogg coinage, indeed a fitting and dramatic end in 1855 to the widespread production of privately minted California gold coins.

The obverse depicts a female portrait adapted from the head of Miss Liberty, but with the coronet inscribed KELLOGG & Co. Stars surround, and the date 1855 is at the bottom. The reverse has an elegantly engraved perched eagle in the style of Charles Cushing Wright's 1851 Humbert coinage, but slightly differently executed, and with the ribbon inscribed 1809 GRS / 887 THOUS. Around the border of the coin appears SAN FRANCISCO CALIFORNIA / FIFTY DOLLS. The fineness of 887/1000 is particularly significant, in the writer's opinion (see notes below), and may well explain the coin's rarity.

In his 1913 work, *Private Gold Coinage of California, 1849-1855*, Edgar H. Adams, noted:

> This represents one of the handsomest pieces of die cutting in the entire California series. No information concerning this Kellogg $50 piece seems to be obtainable. It is quite certain, however, that it was issued at the same time as the Wass, Molitor & Co. pieces of the same value, and like the latter owes its origin to the demand of San Francisco merchants for gold pieces of larger denominations for quick counting purposes.

However, unlike the Wass, Molitor & Co. round $50 pieces, the Kellogg $50 coins were made with Proof surfaces and seem to be presentation or numismatic pieces. So far as I know, there is no documentation of their having served as a medium of exchange in the channels of California commerce.

Background of the Coinage

The production of $50 gold "slugs" of the round format traces its inception to a demand for such in commerce in California. The *San Francisco Herald*, March 1, 1854, noted:

> A petition has been circulated today, and very generally signed, addressed to the Congress of the United States, calling attention to the coinage that is to be made at the Branch Mint in San Francisco and praying that a law may be passed authorizing the issue of Fifty Dollar pieces of the same shape and fineness as the United States Double Eagle.
>
> It will of course be signed by every business man in the community, the advantages of such an issue being self-evident. In a country like our own, where the currency is purely metallic, it is of great importance to have coins issued of a size which will admit of rapid and easy counting, both in receiving and paying money; and the experience of all our businessmen goes to show that in the absence of bank notes the Fifty Dollar piece is the most convenient coin for such a purpose.
>
> The alteration in the shape [from the octagonal $50 then in common use], and putting it up to the United States standard [900 fine instead of the 880, 884, and 887 finenesses used earlier], would make it all that could be desired. If such a coin should be issued, it would in all probability speedily reduce the premium on ounces for East India shipments.

James Guthrie, secretary of the Treasury, responded with his opinion on March 21, 1854, noting that even $20 gold pieces did not circulate actively in the East, "but are soon passed into the possession of the banks and bankers, and their places supplied by bank paper." This being the case, even larger $50 pieces would be of little use there. However, there was no paper money in circulation in California, and, "the high scale of prices prevalent in California for commodities and service…will make larger denominations of coin convenient, particularly in counting and passing large sums…."

Guthrie recommended that $100, $50, and $25 gold coins be authorized for coinage at the San Francisco Mint and be called the Union, Half Union, and Quarter Union, "but that the Half Union only be struck for the present."

Although Guthrie's suggestion and subsequent legislation by Senator William M. Gwin received favorable notice, and the Senate passed Gwin's bill by a large majority, the proposal died in the House of Representatives. In this void the private coinage firm of Wass, Molitor & Co. issued round $50 coins in large numbers to fill the demand. Kellogg & Co.'s round dies were never used to strike circulating coinage, so far is known, and all impressions were Proofs.

The writer theorizes that as the competing Wass, Molitor & Co. round $50 coin was of .900 fineness and bore the inscription "900 THOUS." on the reverse, Kellogg & Co. decided that its own coin, marked 887 THOUS., would not effectively circulate in commerce. The known Proof examples may well be test pieces shown to bankers and merchants and, retained by the principals of the firm. The Proof dies exhibit a tracery of cracks which may have rendered them unfit for mass coinage use, but in any event the 887/1000 fineness probably militated against large-scale production.

The Kellogg $50 coin is signed F. GRUNER on the neck truncation. In his *Private Gold Coinage of California* study, Edgar H. Adams (p. 87) noted that Grüner was "a well-known die cutter of San Francisco." Further, "This represents one of the handsomest pieces of die-cutting in the entire California series." If Adams knew more, he did not relate it in his text. Moreover, virtually nothing concerning the biography of Grüner has appeared elsewhere in numismatic circles. He is not listed in Leonard Forrer's incomparable *Biographical Dictionary of Medallists*, nor is he treated except in passing by Don Kagin, Richard D. Kenney, Walter Breen, and others who have focused upon California diecutters. Indeed, Kenney discussed diecutting at Kellogg & Co. without even mentioning Grüner.

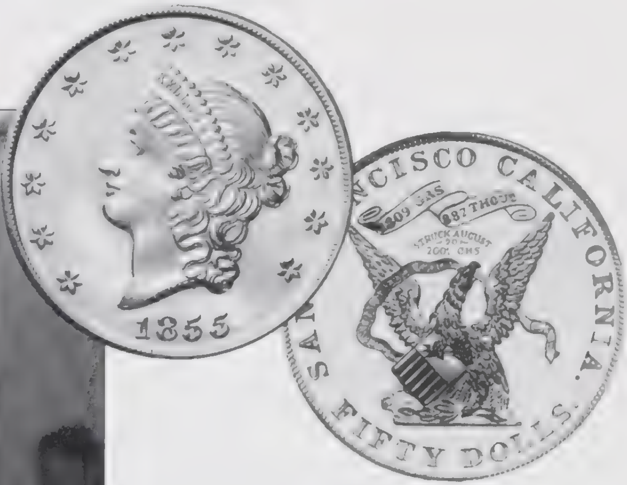
Colville's *Directory and Gazetteer for the City of San Francisco*, 1856-1857, compiled in 1855, lists F. Gruner, seal engraver and die sinker, with business premises at 171 Washington Street and residence on the south side of Vallejo Street between Dupont and Kearny Streets. His workshop was close to that of Alfred Küner (in the store of Braverman & Levy at 167 Washington Street). Grüner is not listed in the 1854 directory, is listed in 1858, but not in 1859. Thus, Grüner's stay in the city seems to have been for only a few years. By contrast, Albert Küner lived there from 1849 until his death on January 23, 1906 (three months before his residence was destroyed in the famous earthquake).

Grüner is not known to have signed any other coinage, and whatever other dies he may have cut have not been recorded in any literature seen by the writer. It is a puzzle today why Adams in 1913 called him a "well-known die cutter."

The author holds just-struck specimen number 9, San Francisco, August 20, 2001. Each impression required two blows of the press to strike up the relief of the design properly.

Chris Karstedt flanked by the two finders of the *S.S. Central America* treasure, Bob Evans and Tommy Thompson.

Dwight Manley and Christine Karstedt at the inauguration of the restrike program, San Francisco, August 20, 2001.



One of the 1855-dated Kellogg commemorative restrikes with the date, August 20, 2001, counterstamped on the reverse.

In 2001, using gold recovered from the treasure ship *S.S. Central America,* special transfer dies were made from the original dies (still in existence), to create a special commemorative restrike for collectors and historians, under the aegis of the California Historical Society. On the reverse ribbon a tiny inscription notes that the gold is from the *Central America,* and the initials C.H.S. refer to the Society's sponsorship.

The Commemorative Restrikes

In 1999 Dwight Manley and the California Gold Marketing Group acquired the rights to most of the rare coins, gold ingots, and other gold found on the wreck of the *S.S. Central America,* lost at sea on September 12, 1857.

By special arrangement, with the California Historical Society as sponsor, the original dies for the Kellogg & Co. $50, which had survived the years, were used to make transfer dies to which a small inscription was added on the otherwise blank ribbon on the reverse, noting the source of the gold and the initials of the Society, C.H.S.

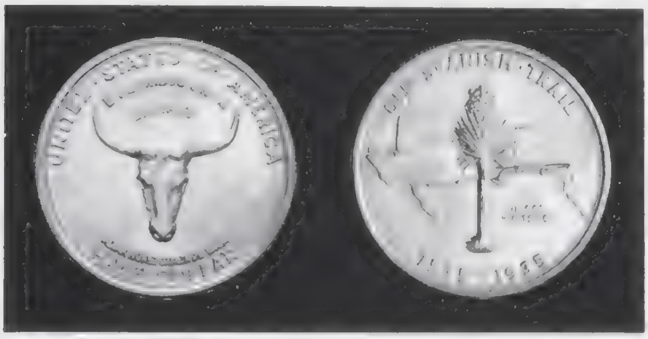
The gold used was taken from certain unsold large gold ingots made in the 1850s by Kellogg & Humbert, in which John Glover Kellogg was a partner, thus giving the commemorative restrikes a particularly unusual connection with the past.

Production of 5,000 pieces, billed as "commemorative restrikes," took place in San Francisco from August 20 to September 12, 2001, or 144 years after the *S.S. Central America* sank, with the specimens struck each day being counterstamped with the appropriate day date.

ADVENTURE NO. 15

A HALF DOLLAR OF, BY, AND FOR HOFFECKER

1935 Old Spanish Trail Half Dollar



It is not often that a private citizen can have a personal or "pet" coin minted to order, to be legal tender and to be sold at a profit. But that is exactly what happened with L.W. Hoffecker, whose 1935 Old Spanish Trail commemorative half dollar was produced by him and for his benefit.

* * *

A Cozy Arrangement

The 1935 Old Spanish Trail commemorative half dollar represents one of many instances of an issue primarily designed for the exploitation of coin collectors. L.W. Hoffecker, who was to keep his fences mended by investigating later abuses of commemorative half dollars on behalf of the American Numismatic Association and to serve as president of the ANA 1939-1941, was the originator of this promotion.

Throughout the 1930s Hoffecker was extremely successful in diverting attention away from himself, so that criticisms directed toward the 1935 Hudson centennial half dollar, the 1934-1938 Daniel Boone pieces, and others did not fall on his shoulders as well. However, the situation can also be considered in the light that in 1935 collectors were fair game and that Hoffecker was simply trying to make a profit, the desire of many businessmen.

The whole affair is not much different than having a fox in charge of the henhouse! Or Richard M. Nixon giving a lecture on ethics. Or Adolph Hitler espousing his desire for international peace. Unlike the biblical prophet of old, Hoffecker did receive honor in his own time. Only in later years was he exposed as a rascal.

In correspondence years later with dealer Abner Kreisberg, L.W. Hoffecker candidly told of his involvement with the design and authorization of the Old Spanish Trail half dollars. By this time his profit had been banked, he had served as president of the ANA, and, apparently, felt safe to relate certain details that were withheld or even stated differently earlier:[1]

> I was the originator of getting out these coins to raise money for the museum.[2] I drew the design for the coin

---

[1] Letter to Kreisberg, co-owner of the Numismatic Gallery, Beverly Hills, CA, May 2, 1953. (Author's reference library, which includes over 200 Hoffecker-related pieces of correspondence to and from various individuals.)

[2] Here Hoffecker falsely states his purpose; the museum eventually received just two coins and no money, as Hoffecker himself states in a subsequent paragraph!

> myself, and with the help of a man I picked up on relief [Senn] we made the plaster cast in my office.
>
> I took the design to the Committee of Fine Arts who passed it without any changes whatever, which is unusual.
>
> I then went to Washington and got the bill by the Committee on Coinage, Weights and Measures in both houses of Congress, notwithstanding Mr. [L.W.] Robert, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, who said I could not have the coin. The chairman of the Coinage Committee was against it. Mr. Morgenthau did not approve of the design, but brought the chief engraver of the Mint who did approve of it, but Mr. Morgenthau still said I could not have my initials on the coins, but they are there.
>
> I paid for the coins out of my own pocket and received them all. The Museum only got two coins which I personally presented to them. I distributed the entire issue and have a letter from the Department of the Mint saying there were no complaints about my manner of handling them....

A Bit of Background

In 1929 Hoffecker had set himself up as chairman of the Gadsden Purchase Commission in El Paso, essentially a one-man organization, and had sought to have a commemorative half dollar issue of 10,000 coins to be sold for $1.50 each. Despite approval of the bill in Congress, President Herbert Hoover vetoed the proposal. Undaunted, Hoffecker tried again, this time with the Old Spanish Trail half dollar in 1935. The second time around, Hoffecker visited Washington several times, became friends with congressmen, and even had a five-minute visit with President Franklin D. Roosevelt ("that saved us").[1]

In a form letter to collectors dated June 12, 1935 Hoffecker noted in part:

> I have been selected [*sic!*] by our Museum to handle the distribution of the coins; to have a free hand and not be dictated to by anyone. I promised to take all our coins from one mint and all of one date. I spent considerable time in Washington and met with much opposition on account of the 'racket' some of the committees are making of these commemoratives, and I made the above guarantees voluntarily and am prepared to live up to my promises.

Lest recipients of the letter doubt his credentials, Hoffecker noted that he was American Numismatic Association member No. 2610, and that references could be supplied by Farran Zerbe, Howland Wood, and W.A. Philpott, Jr.[2]

In view of his later "confession" that he "used" the El Paso Museum and only gave them two coins, it is obvious that he hoodwinked just about everyone. As an example, in his book, *United States Commemorative Coins*, Arlie Slabaugh viewed the Old Spanish Trail half dollar situation quite charitably:

> This is one commemorative half dollar that was 'made' by a collector for collectors. Not only was Mr. Hoffecker, the designer, a collector (some years later he was president of the American Numismatic Association), he also was chairman of the El Paso Museum Coin Committee which distributed the coins, the proceeds from which went to further the work of the Museum....

As the coins were sold for $2 each, one cannot help but wonder how far the generous two coins given to the El Paso Museum, total value $4 at the time, "went to further the work of the museum."

The Old Spanish Trail

The El Paso Museum Committee, the important-sounding operating entity used by Hoffecker, picked 1935 to represent the 400th anniversary of a trail used by early explorer Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, "Cabeza de Vaca" meaning in Spanish, "head of a cow." There was no particular reason to have celebrated the anniversary of the year 1535, as the explorer's stay in what later became the United States extended from 1528 to 1536.

Legislation approved on June 5, 1935 provided that no more than 10,000 silver half dollars be coined in connection with the anniversary and that same be delivered to the chairman of the El Paso Museum Coin Committee. How neat this was: A coin dealer designed a commemorative, made plans to market it, and had Congress mandate that the entire production be delivered to him to be sold for whatever price he saw fit!

The following historical information pertaining to the coin was supplied by L.W. Hoffecker to Congress and was utilized in a leaflet in connection with the coinage act:

> **Story of the Old Spanish Trail**
>
> The expedition of Panfilo de Narváez to the North American continent has been the source of considerable historical speculation. He sailed from Spain in June 1527 with five ships and 700 men. The winter of

---

[1] Letter from Hoffecker to sculptor Trygve Rovelstad, Elgin, IL, September 26, 1935.

[2] Zerbe, a past president of the American Numismatic Association, was highly respected at the time, and few were aware of certain aspects of his checkered career (such as phony promotions involving the 1903 commemorative gold dollars for the Louisiana Purchase Exposition and his insincerity or possibly even fraud involving certain ANA matters circa 1908-1910). Howland Wood was the distinguished curator of the American Numismatic Society, a man with a flawless reputation. W.A. Philpott, Jr., long-term secretary of the Texas Bankers Association, was likewise well regarded.

1527-28 was spent in West Indian waters, where storm and disease reduced the expedition to 400 men and 80 horses. In the spring of 1528 de Narváez divided his forces. The greater portion of the expedition disembarked and under his leadership proceeded to explore the interior of the country. De Narváez experienced many hardships on this journey. Food was scarce, the Indians unfriendly, the land marshy and heavily wooded, offering small means of sustenance. Horses were killed for food and the skins used for fresh water bags to make possible a sea voyage. The remnant of the expedition put out to sea and sailed in rude boats along the shores of the present states of Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas. Food and water failing, the expedition landed to search for the means of sustenance. At sea many had died from privation, and on land others were killed by the Indians.

According to the best information obtainable, all the rude barges were lost at sea or wrecked on the coast. Only 80 men survived, and these came together on an island off the coast of Texas in November 1528. Death from various causes and slavery among the Indians separated and reduced the number of survivors during the succeeding six years to four Spaniards and a Negro. Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, treasurer of the de Narváez expedition, was one of these five survivors, and for the most part we are indebted to him for the recorded story of the expedition and the adventures of the few who were eventually to reach the Spanish settlements of New Spain. The authenticity of the account of the expedition, the hardships endured, and the fact that these finally reached the settlements in the spring of 1536 have never been questioned.

During the first winter after reaching the Texas coast the surviving Spaniards were parceled out among the Indians as slaves. Cabeza de Vaca began early to plan escape but, according to his narrative, delayed six years in the hope that he might take with him his friend Lope de Oviedo. Late in the year 1534 all details were worked out for the escape, and de Vaca with two friends and the Negro, all being survivors of the original de Narváez expedition, made their way, with the help of friendly Indians whom they encountered, from an island—now generally believed to have been Galveston Island—across the continent to the settlements of New Spain. Some of our most eminent historians lay the route of Cabeza de Vaca through the present city of Alpine, Texas and through the Big Bend country of the Rio Grande. Cabeza de Vaca was the first European to traverse this great wilderness, and we believe his expedition should be fittingly commemorated by the issuance of the special coin provided by the bill under consideration.

The Design

A representation of a steer, facing the viewer, was adopted as the obverse motif for the coin, a punning reference to the name of the explorer. This prompted one observer years later to say that instead of depicting Franklin Roosevelt on the 1946 dime, a field of roses could have been used instead, representing the literal meaning of the Roosevelt name. The reverse of the Old Spanish Trail half dollar showed a yucca tree in full bloom, superimposed on a map showing the early part of the trail extending from the coast of Florida to El Paso, with the city name EL PASO at the end. Hoffecker himself designed the piece, and plaster models were prepared in mid-July 1935 by Edmund J. Senn, an unemployed El Paso sculptor.

L.W. Hoffecker told of the procedure:[1]

> I corresponded with two or three [sculptors] in the East and came to the conclusion I would not be able to get our coin for another six months as I could not convince them we knew what we wanted even after the Commission of Fine Arts had approved our design and volunteered the information it would make a fine coin. They still claimed it would not look well in plaster and I must give them a free hand to make what changes they saw fit.
>
> This is not my method of doing business, so I looked up a local sculptor [Senn], who is just as crazy as the rest of them, and as our time was limited it was necessary that he put in every minute to get the models ready for the next meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts, who meet only once a month.
>
> To keep him at work it was necessary for me to go and get him and bring him to my garage and stay with him all day and take him home every night. Even then he made changes in the few minutes I had to be away from him, but I finally got the models finished and to New York the day before the Commission met. Notwithstanding what all the other sculptors had said, our models were approved by the Commission with a suggestion for one or two minor changes which they were willing to waive in order to expedite the issuing of the coin.

Cornelius Vermeule in his *Numismatic Art in America* study put the design of this coin in a special class by itself:

> The half dollar of 1935 known as the Old Spanish Trail can safely be designated the ugliest commemorative coin ever produced by a United States mint. It may be the strongest contestant for the title of least attractive American coin ever manufactured under official auspices between 1793 and the present. (A potential rival might be the three-dollar gold piece of the middle nineteenth century or the silver three-cent piece, but the latter has the redeeming feature of delicate workmanship and the former is touched by quaintness, like a ship's figurehead or a cigar-store Indian.)

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[1] Letter to Trygve Rovelstad (designer of the 1936 Elgin half dollar, another issue distributed by Hoffecker, but not as selfishly), September 26, 1935.

> The designer of the Old Spanish Trail half dollar was one L.W. Hoffecker, the numismatist who conceived and promoted the issue. The workmanship, the composition that is, certainly smacks of such amateurishness.

Production and Distribution

In September 1935 10,008 pieces were struck, and all but the extra eight assay coins were subsequently sent to El Paso.[1] Hoffecker offered these at $2 each, a price which was double that charged for the controversial Hudson coins which were "sold out" a few months earlier and double the price charged in 1935 for Arkansas half dollars. While the Arkansas entrepreneurs were satisfied with selling their coins for 100% more than face value, Hoffecker wanted 300%. However, this high price brought forth no complaints of profiteering, or at least complaints were kept out of the pages of *The Numismatist.* On the other hand, the 1928 Hawaiian Sesquicentennial coins had been a sellout at the original $2 issue price.

The Old Spanish Trail halves were advertised in two magazines, *The Numismatist* and *Hobbies,* July, August, and September 1935.

It is believed that Hoffecker distributed the majority of the Old Spanish Trail coins at $2 each to interested persons, primarily collectors. There is no evidence that large quantities were reserved for speculators, although many coins were retained by Hoffecker himself, *despite his public statements to the contrary.*

The outstanding financial and public relations success scored by the distribution of the Old Spanish Trail half dollars inspired Hoffecker to become involved further, and the next year saw him working in El Paso in an arrangement whereby he was the official outlet for half dollars made to commemorate an event in distant Elgin, Illinois.

Hoffecker Testifies to Congress

In testimony before the Senate Committee on Banking and Currency, March 11, 1936, L.W. Hoffecker, acting in the capacity of chairman of the Legislative Committee of the American Numismatic Association, discussed his involvement with the Old Spanish Trail half dollar:[2]

> Mr. Hoffecker:
>
> I will say that I have been out to the San Diego Exposition and talked to those people and got an idea of how many they have sold. I am quite familiar also with the Maryland issue, and also with the Connecticut issue, and with the Old Spanish Trail issue that I was the distributor of myself.
>
> Senator Alva B. Adams:
>
> When you say you were "the distributor, how did you become the distributor?
>
> Mr. Hoffecker:
>
> I was asked by our people to come up here and sponsor the bill, being the only coin collector in that district,[3] and I came up and sponsored the bill, and it was passed, and I distributed the coins on their orders.
>
> Senator Adams:
>
> But you had no ownership of them?
>
> Mr. Hoffecker:
>
> No, sir; none whatever.[4] We got 10,000 coins in our issue. I talked with all the big collectors and the dealers discouraged me, and told me that on account of the depression and so many other bills being up that I wouldn't be able to sell those coins. They had me worried a little bit, but I decided to go ahead anyway, and I guess I was a little bit too anxious to get orders, so at the start I would take orders for 10 or 15 coins from a single person.
>
> The dealers did not warm up to them to start with, but finally they sent in orders, and I let some of them have 25; let one of them for instance have 25, and another one have 25, and a few more got less than that. Later I refused to increase their quotas. Then orders began to come in pretty fast, and I began to hold them down. If I had not been scared at the start I would have been able to furnish every collector in the United States, as well as in foreign countries, from those 10,000 coins.
>
> As it was I ran short about 1,000 coins. It was because, as I say, I got a little bit worried. One man wrote in on an association's stationery and said he had been authorized—it was by the Kansas City Club—to get 50 coins to pass around among their members. I had no reason to doubt his letter, and so I cashed his check and accepted his order. But a week later I got a letter from the secretary of the club saying he had been authorized to get them, and when I told him about the other man he said that other man was in bad repute and had no right to get them from me.

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[1] Of the 10,000 coins sent to Hoffecker, examination found only three to be "defective." The shipping and insurance cost for the coins was $177. (Cf. Hoffecker correspondence in the author's library.)

[2] From "Coinage of Commemorative 50-Cent Pieces," the transcript of the hearing, published in 1936.

[3] A patently false statement. Even in his own correspondence he referred numerous times to other collectors in El Paso, a number of whom were said to have purchased one or two coins. Hoffecker's statements of this period are laced with inconsistencies, misleading information, and untruths.

[4] A blatant lie. Compare this to Hoffecker's later statement to Abner Kreisberg, "I paid for the coins out of my own pocket and received them all. The Museum only got two coins which I presented to them."

> Senator Adams:
>
> You sold all those coins to dealers?
>
> Mr. Hoffecker:
>
> No; to collectors. I let a few dealers have as many as 100 coins and some may have duplicated orders under another name.
>
> Senator Adams:
>
> What percentage of the coins went to dealers as distinguished from collectors?
>
> Mr. Hoffecker:
>
> Not over 10 percent. I would not let dealers have as many as I did if I had not been a little scared at the start. If I had held the dealers down, I would have had more for the collectors; and I might say that I let some collectors have 10 or 15, but if I had held them down to 5 coins apiece, I would have had enough for all of them.

More in Hoffecker's Own Words

Correspondence from L.W. Hoffecker to Walter P. Nichols, dated August 7, 1936, commented on the earlier distribution of Old Spanish Trail pieces as well as other matters:

> There is quite a bit of complaint about the collectors being called on to finance these issues [commemoratives in general] for the commissions. If a small collector wants to be sure of a few coins, it is up to him to put up the money as soon as he hears about them, but he should then be sure that he will get the coins. First come, first served. Every commission that I have had any correspondence with has been sadly disappointed about the local enthusiasm, or consumption, rather, of these coins. Every time I mentioned our coin here in town, I was called a highway robber for asking $2 for them. Our newspapers gave me plenty of coverage for three months, and I got 150 orders from residents of El Paso.
>
> After it became known that there was a premium on them, they had the nerve to come around and tell me that since they had been a long time friend of mine they were counting on me to save them some coins. Some of them got very sarcastic about it, but I was not peddling coins from door to door, nor guaranteeing them to increase in value....
>
> I did not get in any trouble whatever with the Old Spanish Trail. I just handled it like I always have handled my private business. I kept track of how many coins I had sold every day, and when I had sold within 1,000 of what I expected to get, I stopped accepting orders. I was also careful when I saw the coins were selling well not to take too large an order from a dealer.
>
> I gave all the dealers all the coins they asked for the first time, but after that I refused to double any of their orders. With a thousand coins, I was able to take care of all emergencies, like different congressmen and senators, and the Department of the Mint, who wrote in asking for coins, and persons whom I was under obligation to, and if you are a subscriber to *The Numismatist* you will see how many favorable remarks have been made about the way that issue was handled.

Hoffecker had more to say to Nichols in a letter dated August 13, 1936:

> I got into an argument in New York over the Old Spanish Trail. A dealer advertised the coins for sale at auction two months before they were minted, and I objected to it, as a lot of people would have roasted me for giving dealers coins before they got them, and he got pretty hard-boiled about it.
>
> My secretary suggested that we cut him off without any coins at all, but I immediately told her that I was financially responsible, that I had accepted his order in writing, and that he would have cause for action against me. To confirm my opinion, I took it up with my attorney, and he told me I had better make delivery, which I would have done anyway, as he could have told his story in print, and made it sound bad for me.
>
> I tried to smooth over everybody in handling the Old Spanish Trail issue, and think I succeeded very well. I had plenty of reasons for getting peeved and telling some of them something, but just forgot about it....

From L.W. Hoffecker's Files

The following excerpts from letters in L.W. Hoffecker's files (plus an auction catalogue description) indicate that his stories were inconsistent concerning the "sellout" of Old Spanish Trail half dollars at the time of issue, and also give some interesting sidelights on the distribution of the pieces. Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Hoffecker, it would seem, would be candidates for an award for veracity:

Letter from Hoffecker to A.D. Gutheil, February 25, 1936:

> I am sorry to inform you that all of the Old Spanish Trail coins were sold by our committee in the middle of September, two weeks before we got them from the mint, as they had been advertised for three months in the numismatic journals previous to that time.
>
> Most of the coins went to the collectors, the dealers getting very few, and no one locally bought any for resale.... All coins were sold by our committee for $2 each and postage.

In response to Fred H. French, a Los Angeles collector who wrote on October 16, 1935 seeking a single Spanish Trail half dollar, Hoffecker wrote on October 21, 1935:

> Replying to your letter of the 16th I would say I sold a few coins in Los Angeles which I expect are for

> resale. The El Paso people did not buy any in quantities; just one or two for keepsakes....

Letter dated March 10, 1936 from Hoffecker to John S. Maher, a Pennsylvania collector:

> All of the Old Spanish Trail coins were sold by our committee by the middle of September as they had been advertised for three months in the numismatic journals.... No one in El Paso bought any coins for resale.

Despite the fact that Hoffecker said he was sold out, when Gerald E. Carhart, a Hudson, New York collector wrote to him on October 19, 1935, offering to exchange a Hudson commemorative half dollar for an Old Spanish Trail half dollar, Hoffecker answered as follows on October 26:

> Replying to your letter of the 19th I am sending you one of our Old Spanish Trail coins and you may send me a Hudson coin in return. I would like to get one or two more on the same terms, there are several collectors in El Paso who got left out on the Hudson, and as they have five or six each of our coins they would like to trade for Hudson coins on this basis. If you know of anyone else, please give them my address.

This was in contradiction with Hoffecker's statement that local collectors purchased no more than one or two coins each, and that in any event he did not have any!

A letter from L.W. Hoffecker to E.M. Williams, January 17, 1936: "The money raised was put in our museum fund to purchase things for the museum." This is another ridiculous statement, as the museum received only two coins!

In a letter to Abe Kosoff, Numismatic Gallery, Beverly Hills, California, February 10, 1953, L.W. Hoffecker revealed, probably unintentionally, that he indeed had a quantity of Old Spanish Trail half dollars on hand:

> Received your letter of the 9th and sorry we have a very limited number of the Old Spanish Trail coins, and many collectors seem to like to buy from the designer of the coin, and we have no trouble selling 2 or 3 coins at $15 each every week.

This was equal to a quantity of 100 to 150 coins sold per year!

In a letter to B. Max Mehl, dated February 27, 1954, at which time L.W. Hoffecker was very ill and under a doctor's care, Mrs. Hoffecker stated:

> In reference to the Old Spanish Trail half dollars, we only had 12 of these coins and Mr. Hoffecker decided to keep them for his grandchildren and great grandchildren, as the coins will mean more to them than the money would mean to him.

When coins from L.W. Hoffecker's estate were sold by Superior Galleries, February 1987, the following commentary appeared on p. 372 of the catalogue (emphasis ours): "The following group of SIXTY-THREE Old Spanish Trail half dollars...comes from the estate of L.W. Hoffecker...."

The whole Hoffecker affair, not important in the overall scheme of numismatics or as the world turns, reveals that even when there is no particular reason or incentive to do so, some people are pathological liars. Of course, all of this go-round simply adds to the interest of the Old Spanish Trail half dollars today. In their own way, scoundrels can be lovable, and 99% of what Hoffecker did and said was just fine.

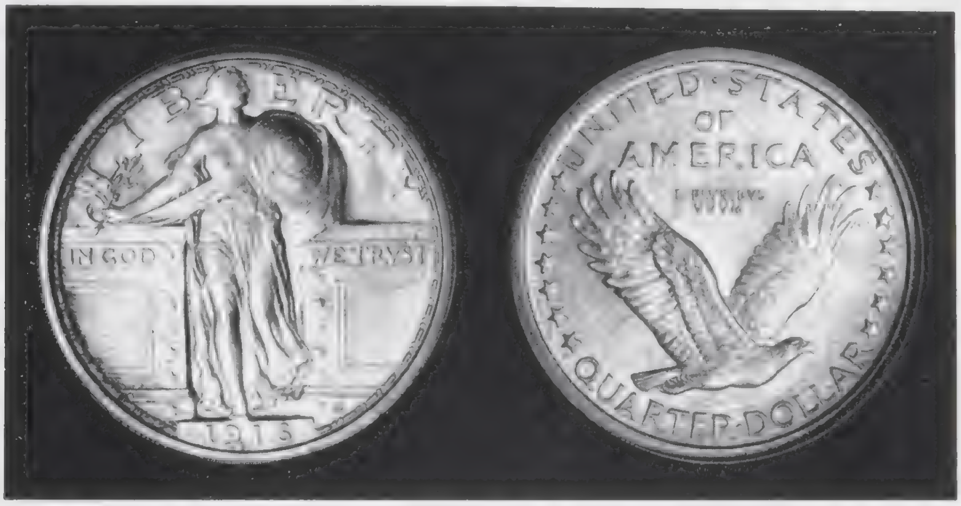
Collecting Old Spanish Trail Half Dollars

The 1935 Old Spanish Trail half dollar, sometimes called the El Paso half dollar, and more recently simply called the Spanish Trail (without the "Old") half dollar, was popular with collectors from the very start, and this enthusiasm has carried through to the present day. The relatively low mintage of the issue has put it high on the list of pieces desired for completion of a type set or full set of commemorative half dollars.

The Old Spanish Trail half dollars were sold into the numismatic community with the result that most of the original mintage exists today in collector's hands. Specimens encountered are apt to be in the lower ranges of Mint State from MS-60 to 63. MS-64 and MS-65 coins, although scarce, are far more available than are comparably graded Hawaiian and Hudson half dollars.

ADVENTURE NO. 16

THE ELUSIVE 1916 STANDING LIBERTY 25¢



Minted to the extent of only 52,000 pieces, the 1916 quarter dollar represents the first year of the new design by Hermon A. MacNeil, one of several sculptors who designed coins during the decade. The design with Miss Liberty having one breast exposed was modified in 1917, when she was encased in a jacket of armor.

* * *

Illustrious New Designs of 1916

The year 1916 brought with it a sweeping reform in American silver coinage. The Liberty Head designs of Charles E. Barber, used since 1892, were replaced by motifs designed by sculptors in the private sector. Hermon A. MacNeil was tapped to design the Standing Liberty quarter, while Adolph A. Weinman created the "Mercury" dime and the Liberty Walking half dollar. For the first time in American coinage, the dime, quarter, and half dollar were issued in designs that were not related to each other in common design forms. In contrast, earlier issues of these denominations shared motifs of Barber's Liberty Head, the preceding Liberty Seated, and earlier Capped Bust and Draped Bust motifs, and other designs.

Making its debut in 1916, the Standing Liberty series was produced continually from that point through 1930, with the exception of 1922. No quarter dollars were made in 1931, and when mintage was resumed in 1932, the Washington motif, first intended as a commemorative, became the standard. Thus, the Standing Liberty quarter faded from the American scene.

Today, most varieties of Standing Liberty quarters are highly collectible, the two notable rarities—and these are not "impossible"—being the 1916, the topic of the present "adventure," and the 1918/7-S overdate. I have always enjoyed the series, and when in the course of business a nice collection of these quarters comes our way, I pause to reflect upon each coin and appreciate the design all over again.

The story of Hermon A. MacNeil's creation of this design is capably told by J.H. Cline in his appropriately titled book, *Standing Liberty Quarters*. Young Dora Doscher was the model for the coin. On the screen as Miss Doris Doree, the multi-talented Miss Doscher was also seen on the Broadway stage, and posed in the studios of several artists and sculptors. She was a friend of sculptor MacNeil. J.H. Cline commented, "Many interesting chapters could be written about Miss Dora Doscher in association with the MacNeil family." Married, she was later known as Doris Doscher Baum.

A long time later in 1972 another contender stepped forward, Mrs. Irene MacDowell, who claimed that it was she who did the modeling. However, by this time the artist, Hermon MacNeil, had long since died, and few numismatists put any stock in the MacDowell claim.

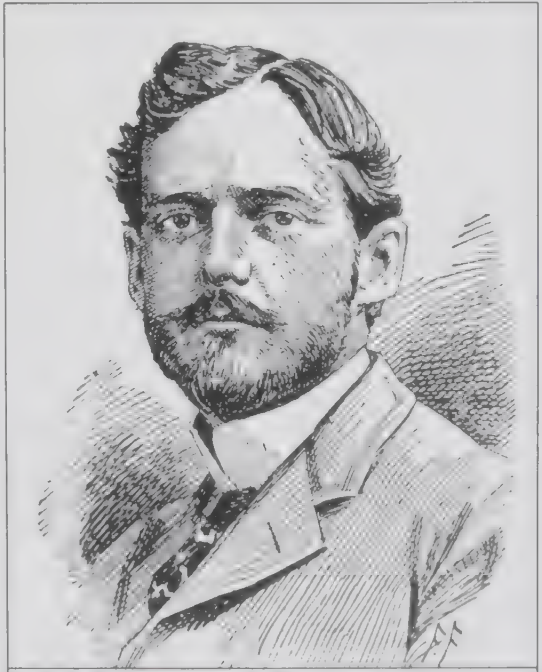
A Design Switcheroo

The Standing Liberty quarter series commences with the 1916, with a low mintage of 52,000 pieces. One would normally expect that many would have been saved as a novelty as the first year of issue, and pieces would be rather plentiful. Exactly what happened is not clear, but probably as the 1916 quarter was produced very late in the year, and as the 1917-dated examples of the same type were made in large numbers, most of the public demand was probably absorbed by the more numerous 1917 pieces. The 1916 was elusive from the outset.

In 1917 the mintage of the Standing Liberty quarter was expanded to include production at all three active mints—Philadelphia, Denver, and San Francisco. Part way through the year the design was changed.

On the first version of the design as used in 1916 and early 1917, Miss Liberty was shown with an exposed right breast. The revised motif included, among other things, Miss Liberty encased in a suit of mail—certainly a classic case of overcompensation. The reverse was modified as well, and now the eagle was depicted with three stars below it.

For a long time it was stated that the change in Miss Liberty's dress was in response to public outrage against nudity. This makes a nice story, and it is one that was widely believed—including by the present writer—until some investigation was conducted. Checking into the matter, neither I nor anyone else has been able to come across any contemporary (1917) commentary, complaint, or anything else suggesting that the public objected to the nude aspect of Miss Liberty.



Hermon A. MacNeil, designer of the 1916 Standing Liberty quarter dollar. (*Dictionary of American Portraits*, Dover Publications, Inc.)

Instead, the design seems to have been changed by MacNeil for other reasons, possibly to indicate preparedness for the World War (which had been raging in Europe since 1914). One might say that the first design showed America personified as an Amazon, guarding the portal of Liberty, and that the second design showed her in an armed, defensive posture.

The modified design made its appearance part way through 1917. Almost immediately, problems arose with the sharpness of striking. While nearly all 1917 quarters of the early or Type I design have sharp details on the head of Miss Liberty, the Type II or modified issues do not. From then through the end of the series there were continuing difficulties with having the pieces strike up fully.

In 1925 a slight modification was made to the date position, but still the problem of striking sharpness continued. Today, numismatists assess the sharpness of the head of Miss Liberty, calling particularly sharp pieces "Full Head" or some high fraction such as "90% Full Head."

Numismatics and the 1916 Quarter

Only 52,000 1916 Standing Liberty quarters were struck, this figure being far and away the lowest production quantity for any regular coin in that design series.

The low mintage was not widely publicized in 1916-1917, and the public was not alerted to the scarcity of the 1916. There were no popular coin books that gave mintages, and not many collectors took the effort to get a copy of *The Annual Report of the Director of the Mint*. Mintage figures were routinely published in *The Numismatist*, but not much attention was paid to them. The "low mintage syndrome" in the hobby was still more than a decade away.

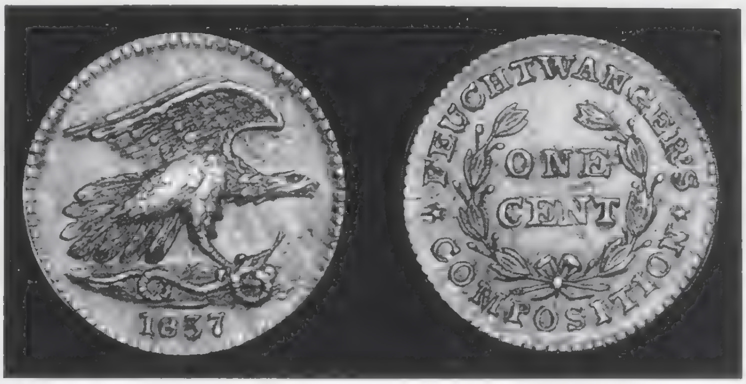
Apparently, nearly all 1916 quarters of the new design slipped unobtrusively into circulation. Although contemporary numismatists were alerted to the new motif, and many sought an example of the type, there was very little interest in assembling sets by date and mintmark sequence. This latter discipline did not become popular until the 1930s when Wayte Raymond launched the *Standard Catalogue of U.S. Coins* (1934) and in the same decade published a popular series of "National" coin album pages, discussed under "Adventure No. 8," the 1903-O silver dollar.

By the 1920s the 1916 Standing Liberty quarter dollar was recognized as being scarce by the few who were interested. In Mint State such pieces were particularly hard to find. Henry Chapman (the Philadelphia dealer) and John Zug (who conducted his highly successful mail order business from a barn on his homestead in Bowie, Maryland) maintained a small supply, but examples were lacking in most other dealers' stocks. Abe Kosoff in a *Coin World* article, April 12, 1967, suggested that William L. Pukall had put away several rolls of these coins in 1916 and started selling them years later, apparently dispersing them all by the 1940s. Having had quite a few dealings with Pukall in the 1950s (but none involving 1916 quarters), I can say that Kosoff's narrative is no doubt true, for Pukall had hundreds of certain twentieth-century coins, including Matte Proof Lincoln cents and Buffalo nickels still in the tissue wrappers of issue.

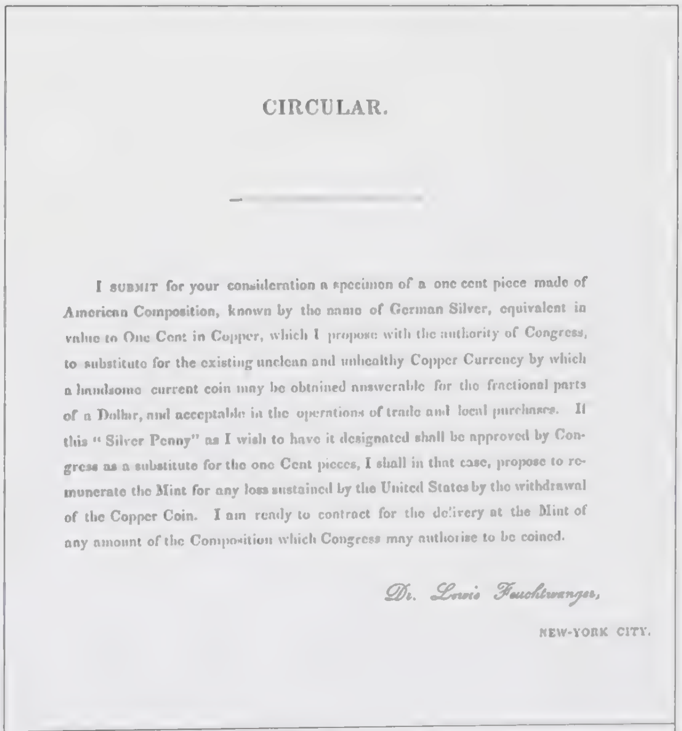
Today the fame of the 1916 Standing Liberty quarter is widespread, and it immediately comes to mind whenever twentieth century rarities are mentioned. In fact, it is hard to believe that it was not a sensation in its own time—in 1916, when it first saw the light of day.

ADVENTURE NO. 17

DR. FEUCHTWANGER AND HIS 1837 "SILVER PENNY"



One-cent piece made by Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger and circulated in large numbers in 1837. Of small diameter, this was a precursor of the Flying Eagle cent, but 20 years ahead of its time. The cent was made of Feuchtwanger's Composition, an alloy intended to look like silver. (Collection of the American Numismatic Society, New York)



CIRCULAR.

I SUBMIT for your consideration a specimen of a one cent piece made of American Composition, known by the name of German Silver, equivalent in value to One Cent in Copper, which I propose with the authority of Congress, to substitute for the existing unclean and unhealthy Copper Currency by which a handsome current coin may be obtained answerable for the fractional parts of a Dollar, and acceptable in the operations of trade and local purchases. If this "Silver Penny" as I wish to have it designated shall be approved by Congress as a substitute for the one Cent pieces, I shall in that case, propose to remunerate the Mint for any loss sustained by the United States by the withdrawal of the Copper Coin. I am ready to contract for the delivery at the Mint of any amount of the Composition which Congress may authorise to be coined.

Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger,

NEW-YORK CITY.

"Circular" from Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger, 1837, enclosing "for your consideration a specimen of a one-cent piece made of American Composition, known by the name of German silver...." Presumably, these samples were distributed widely, such as to congressmen. (From the archives of Kenneth E. Bressett)

Dr. Feuchtwanger

Fair warning! (as auctioneers sometimes say). This "adventure" is more like a trip to a numismatic Never Never Land, a journey to become acquainted with an individual whose importance in our hobby was immense, but whose name today is not widely known. Moreover, get set for "total immersion" in the era of the 1830s. At least that's how I felt after re-reading this "adventure" after writing it—an effort which is probably one of the most commercially unjustifiable things I have ever done! Why did I do it? I'm not quite sure, but often the finding of one obscure scrap of information leads to the search for another, until, finally, I have to say, Stop!

If anyone ever writes a book-length biography of Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger, I will be first in line to buy a copy. In the meantime, I will have to be satisfied with the following text—an *excerpt* (believe it or not!) from years of collecting press clippings, directories, and other snippets of information.[1] Of course, this has been very enjoyable. Actually, to answer my own question, that is why I did it.

If you are in a hurry, skip over this "adventure" and go to the next one. Or, curl up in an easy chair and pretend "you are there" when all of this happened, back in the early nineteenth century.

Feuchtwanger was an entrepreneur and scientist who simultaneously ranks as one of the most important figures in mid-nineteenth century American numismatic history and in the study of mineralogical gems.

Born in Fürth, Bavaria, Germany, January 11, 1805, the son of a mineralogist,[2] he developed an interest in science at an early age. In 1827 he graduated as a medical doctor from the University of Jena, Germany, an institution with which he kept in contact for years thereafter.

Numismatic historian Edgar H. Adams gave a different (and incorrect) birth date and also told of a favorite sport:[3]

> Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger was born at Furth, near Nuremburg, Germany, in 1807. He was a graduate of Heidelberg University, and in his student days was a noted and successful duelist. It is said that he fought no less than nine duels, in each of which he was the victor.
>
> The story is told that the only serious wound he received in these encounters was that from a Prince with whom he was fighting a duel, who, infuriated by the mastery of Dr. Feuchtwanger, let his passions get the better of him and struck the Doctor while his guard was down, and in consequence disgraced himself.

Seeking expanded opportunities, Lewis Feuchtwanger emigrated to America in 1829 and settled in New York City, where in time he opened the first German pharmacy. From this time onward he imported medicines, apparatus, chemicals, and other items from his native country.

Feuchtwanger's Composition

In this year of his arrival in the United States Lewis Feuchtwanger introduced an alloy he had compounded, later widely known as Feuchtwanger's Composition, a version of German silver, intended to imitate silver through an alloy of other metals, typically nickel, copper, and tin, sometimes with a trace of silver.

To differentiate his alloy from the German silver of others and to build a trade for it, he called his compound not only Feuchtwanger's Composition, but also suggested that it be referred to as American Silver. This alloy was recommended as being ideal as a substitute for silver in many uses and for copper in coinage.

By 1831 he set up a drugstore, curiosity shop, and museum at 377 Broadway, near the corner of White Street,[4] where he would remain until 1837. Per the latest (1830) federal census, New York City had 202,957 people. Broadway, which at that time extended from Battery Place north to Fourth Street, was the grand promenade and the location of upscale businesses.

In 1831 he contributed an article about arsenic to Silliman's *American Journal of Science and Arts*, perhaps the first of his expositions to be printed in the United States. Later, he would be recognized as a prolific author.

Edgar H. Adams stated this:[5]

> It was in 1831 that we find the first mention of the Feuchtwanger Composition, which no doubt was created before he came to this country. On a consignment of this metal from abroad Dr. Feuchtwanger was compelled to pay the Custom House duty on silver, the inspectors not knowing the difference. Undoubtedly he was the first to introduce his metal, or German silver, to the United States, and was the first manufacturer of the metal in this country.

This would seem to indicate that he depended upon a contact in Germany or elsewhere in Europe to make his alloy. This would have been logical, as he continued to be an active importer of other German products for his pharmacy.

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[1] The present narrative mainly deals with numismatics and peripheral subjects. Feuchtwanger's deep involvement with mineralogy could form the subject of an even larger study.

[2] Certain information is from *Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, Vol. II, 1888, pp. 444-445,

[3] "Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger," by Edgar H. Adams, *The Numismatist*, June 1913. Albert U. Todd, at the time the president of the firm of L. Feuchtwanger & Co., of 54 Fulton Street, New York City, furnished certain information to Adams. Some this may have been "tradition."

[4] *Longworth's American Almanac, New-York Register, and City Directory*, New York, Thomas Longworth, 1831, p. 272; "druggist." This is the earliest directory entry located for Feuchtwanger. • For other information: *Longworth's American Almanac, New-York Register, and City Directory*, New York, Thomas Longworth, 1832 and later editions. • In New York City at the time it was the practice for household renters to sign one-year leases, with May 1 being "moving day" for those going from one location to another—a coordination with minimized vacancies. Renters were apt to relocate frequently—several times within a decade—as even a casual inspection of directory listings of the era will reveal.

[5] "Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger," by Edgar H. Adams, *The Numismatist*, June 1913.

The Store-Museum

In addition to his business as a druggist and chemist, "he also sold natural curiosities, such as rare minerals, gems, preserved reptiles, etc., a large collection of which he placed on exhibition at Peale's Museum and Gallery of Fine Arts at 252 Broadway,[1] and at a later time (in the 1850s) at the New York Lyceum of Natural History. At his Broadway store, 'one door below White Street,' he advertised 'Nuremburgh Salve' and 'Kreosote (a recent German discovery for preventing toothache.') These nostrums seem to have been highly esteemed in their time."[2]

About July 1, 1832, the Asiatic or Malignant Cholera made its appearance in New York City. The plague continued to the end of October 20, by which time 3,499 deaths had been reported, with the peak, 716, for the week ending July 28.[3] Feuchtwanger put his training to good use and "practiced medicine, being particularly active during the cholera epidemic of 1832."[4]

The cholera faded quickly, and in 1833 only 10 deaths from this cause were reported in the city. In that year Jacob Feuchtwanger, dentist, is listed at the same 377 Broadway, and resided at 30 Hudson Street.[5]

In 1834 Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger is given as proprietor of a German drug and chemical store and laboratory, 377 Broadway, with dentist Jacob Feuchtwanger listed with the same information as in 1833.[6]

American Institute Awards

To further the advance of agriculture, manufacturing, and commerce the American Institute was founded in New York City in January 1828 and incorporated on May 2, 1829. Each year its Annual Fair (first held in October 1828[7]) would showcase various exhibits, which would in many instances be awarded a gold medal (highest honor), silver medal, or diploma (lowest recognition). In addition, if a medal had been given previously for a product, another type of diploma would be awarded if it was deemed worthy of a later honor. Venues for the Fair included Masonic Hall; Chapel Hall, Niblo's Garden at the northeast corner of Broadway and Prince Street; Castle Garden, and, in the mid-1850s the Crystal Palace. When the last-named facility burned to the ground on October 5, 1858, the American Institute Fair displays were in place, but had not yet been judged. Everything was a total loss.

In 1834 Lewis Feuchtwanger was awarded a silver medal for the display of his special alloy, Feuchtwanger's Composition, and products made from it. Likely, the medal was from dies cut by James Bogardus, possibly from a master by Moritz Fürst. "In 1831 he [Bogardus] invented an engraving machine, which cut the steel die for the first gold medal of the American Institute, and many beautiful medallions.... About this time he invented the transfer machine, for producing bank-note plates from separate dies, now in general use...."[8] Another silver medal was given to

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[1] A well-known token relating to this attraction bears the inscriptions: PARTHENON / NEW-YORK 1825 on obverse; ADMIT THE BEARER/ PEALE'S MUSEUM & GALLERY OF THE FINE ARTS. The museum opened in a building known as the Parthenon, in late October of that year; earlier, Montaigne's Garden was on the site, and the Sons of Liberty held meetings there in the days prior to the American Revolution. Late in 1840 the name was officially changed to the New York Museum, by an act of the State Legislature, although it had been called that earlier. Also in 1825 the Castle Garden underwent extensive renovations, completed in late February (announcement in the *New-York Evening Post*, April 2, 1825). The lessees, Rathbone & Fitch, issued an oval pass or identification badge, from dies by Richard Trested, depicting the facility on one side, and engraved with the name of the holder of the badge. In time, these became highly sought numismatic items, especially after Wayte Raymond gave special notice to an example in his extensive catalogue of the W.W.C. Wilson Collection, November 1925. • The New York facility, managed by Rembrandt Peale, later by Rubens Peale, was a later branch of Peale's Philadelphia Museum, founded by Charles Willson Peale (who named most his children after famous artists: Raphael, Rembrandt, Vandyke, Titian, and Rubens; plus Franklin, named after the statesman), which opened in his home in 1784, then in the facilities of the American Philosophical Society in January 1794, in which latter year, year-long admission passes were sold for a dollar. Raphael and Rembrandt Peale together, then Rembrandt alone, managed a branch in Baltimore (which was later closed; however, the same building is still used today as a city museum; it is the oldest building in the Western Hemisphere specifically designed as a museum and still used as such [c.f. note from Dr. Joel J. Orosz]). • In 1831 Peale's New York City museum charged $10 for a family membership for one year, $5 for a gentleman's membership (at any time he had the privilege of bringing a lady with him), general admission 25 cents, children, 12½ cents. In 1831 the Siamese twins, Chang and Eng, were featured for a time.

[2] Quoted, slightly revised, from *Hard Times Tokens*, Lyman H. Low, 1900, p. 49.

[3] *New-York As It Is, In 1833; and Citizens' Advertising Directory.* J. Disturnell, New York, 1833, for this and certain other information relating to 1832-3.

[4] *Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, p. 444.

[5] *Longworth's American Almanac, New-York Register, and City Directory*, New York, Thomas Longworth, 1833, p. 257.

[6] *New-York As It Is, In 1834; and Citizens' Advertising Directory.* J. Disturnell, New York, 1834, p. 230. • *Longworth's American Almanac, New-York Register, and City Directory*, New York, Thomas Longworth, 1834, p. 282.

[7] At the Masonic Hall, New York City. Registered attendance was 1,359, and receipts totaled $339. From this modest beginning, in 1829 the Fair attracted about a thousand exhibitors and was viewed by 5,884, with receipts adding up to $1,571.82.

[8] *American Journal of Numismatics*, July 1874, quoting an account in the *New York Herald*, April 1874 (day not given). • Bogardus was a native of Catskill, New York. From about 1836 onward he was in

Feuchtwanger by the American Institute in 1835 and a third in 1836. Apparently, his displays were different each time.[1]

Advertising Tokens Issued

In 1836 Lewis Feuchtwanger is listed as a partner in Feuchtwanger & Senff, apothecaries, 377 Broadway. Henry Senff, M.D., lived at 344 Greenwich Street, just a short distance away.[2] The arrangement must have lasted for but a short time, for Senff is listed separately in later directories.

About this time or in early 1837 Feuchtwanger issued a token in his composition, described as follows in *The Standard Catalog of United States Tokens 1700-1900*, by Russell Rulau, his No. HT-260:

> ***Obverse:*** DR. L. FEUCHTWANGER/ NEW-YORK at top and bottom borders. At center: AMERICAN / SILVER / COMPOSITION / 377 / BROADWAY. Beaded border.
>
> ***Reverse:*** HOUSE & HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE. around border. At center: INSTRUMENTS / [rosette] / BEER PUMPS / PILLARS, GRATES / SPOONS, FORKS / [rosette] / & DINNER SETS. Beaded border.

Not long thereafter, by April 1837, Feuchtwanger moved his business a short distance to 2 Cortlandt (also spelled Courtlandt) Street, setting the scene for his popular "silver penny" and other issues.

But first, the background....

Paper Money Floods Circulation

Beginning in a large way in 1834, the issuance of paper money by banks and other interests increased markedly. Silver coins, trading at a slight premium in terms of gold, all but disappeared. The flood of paper money increased, and soon even gold coins became scarce. On July 11, 1836 President Andrew Jackson issued his "Specie Circular," which mandated that agents handling the sale of government land could receive only silver and gold coins in payment. This order represented an effort to prevent the abuses associated with the often worthless notes of private banks. Thomas Hart Benton, strong advocate of gold coins and "hard money," estimated that by the end of 1836 the government saved $10 million through this precaution. In December 1836, John C. Calhoun called the paper money situation such a disaster that there was no hope for even the best financial and government minds correcting it.

For several years there had been speculation in public lands, the sales figures of which were as follows (through 1838 to show the aftermath):[3]

1833: $3,900,000.
1834: $4,800,000.
1835: $14,700,000.
1836: $24,800,000.
1837: $6,700,000.
1838: $3,000,000.

The land speculation had many causes, not the least of which was the coming of age of the railroad, which was still in its infancy, usable miles of track being just 380 by the end of 1833, rising to 1,273 by the end of 1836. It was believed that railroads would link the East to the farmlands and other districts of the Midwest (then called the West) and bring great prosperity, just as the Erie Canal had done following its opening in 1825.

The reckless dumping of paper money into circulation accelerated.

The Panic of 1837

Early in 1837, economic trouble began when the "Flour Riot" erupted in New York City's Chatham Square, a congested area of shops, horses, carts, and assorted other activities. A crowd of several thousand persons, the "canaille" (the economically disadvantaged) of the city, gathered in the Park near City Hall on Monday afternoon, February 15, to protest the high prices of bread, meat, and fuel. Flour had risen in price to about $12 per barrel, and it was incorrectly rumored that thousands of barrels were being held as a speculation by local merchants who were buying most of the available stock, with one, Eli Hart, hoarding 53,000 barrels. The angry rioters drove off Mayor Cornelius W. Lawrence and the police and stormed the flour warehouse owned by Hart, on Washington Street between Dey and Courtlandt, demanding that flour be sold for $8 per barrel. No satisfaction being gained, the crowd broke into the iron-shuttered brick building and destroyed about 400 to 600 barrels of flour and 1,000 bushels of wheat, causing about $10,000 worth of damage, according to a later claim. The flour warehouses of Meech & Co. and S.H. Herrick & Co. were chal-

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Europe, but returned in 1840. • Andrew Harkness, in "The American Institute: Catalyst for the American Greatness," *Token and Medal Society Journal*, August 1989, gives Moritz Fürst as the engraver for the earliest medal listed, and the illustrated medal bears his signature. • Some later American Institute dies were cut by George H. Lovett, of New York City, among others. A Hard Times token die with the same motif is from dies by Edward Hulseman.

[1] In 1837 the Institute's library included more than 5,000 books. Premises were upstairs at 187 Broadway. Later, the Institute was in a four-story building at 351 Broadway.

[2] *Longworth's American Almanac, New-York Register, and City Directory*, New York, Thomas Longworth, 1836, pp. 247, 594.

[3] William G. Sumner, *A History of American Currency*, p. 119.

lenged, and limited damage occurred. Some 40 rioters were eventually captured, tried, and sent to prison for short terms. The damage resulted in an increased scarcity of flour, which promptly rose in price another fifty cents per barrel.[1]

In March, stock prices on Wall Street fell across a wide front of issues. Anxiety gripped the financial community. New Orleans, the trading center of the Mississippi Valley, was hard hit, and in that southern port Herman Briggs & Company, a leading cotton brokerage house, failed. In a domino effect, other brokers and factors went bankrupt, and banks experienced a cash shortage.

At a March 1837 meeting in New York City, Daniel Webster told a crowd that the growing financial problems were due to government interference with private bank notes and, in particular, Andrew Jackson's Specie Circular. An appeal was made to newly-inaugurated President Martin Van Buren, complaining that real estate values in the country had dropped by $40 million within the past six months. At the time there were 788 banks in the United States (as of one reporting period in 1837; the number was constantly changing), with capital of $291 million. These institutions had $149 million worth of paper money in circulation, backed by only $37.9 million worth of specie. Deposits totaled $127 million. Outstanding loans amounted to $525 million.

It was evident that of every $100 in paper bills in circulation, only about $25 in coins was available for redemption. Bankers hoped against hope that the notes would stay "out there" in commerce.

The credit and cash crunch went from bad to worse, increasing demands were made to redeem paper money, and on May 10, 1837, New York banks suspended specie payments under a state law which permitted them to do this for a one year period. By this time there were about 100 bank failures in the city, causing a loss of about $15 million. Philadelphia banks suspended the payment of gold and silver coins on May 11. After this action virtually every bank elsewhere in the United States suspended paying out coins.

Coins of all kinds disappeared from circulation, and in order to maintain commerce, paper "shinplasters" were issued by merchants, banks, towns, and others. Most of these became as worthless as the broken bank notes they supplemented.

Cent-size copper tokens were made by the millions and helped fill the need for small change, the "Hard Times tokens" that numismatists so dearly love today. Scovill's mint and button factory in Connecticut made many of these, and sold keg lots at well under face value to merchants who wanted to spend them or give them out in change. Many bore advertisements of merchants; others bore anti-Jackson or anti-Van Buren inscriptions, including references to Jackson's still-remembered virulent campaign against the rechartering of the Bank of the United States.[2] Newspapers ignorantly denounced the tokens as "counterfeits." They were not legal tender, but neither were large cents; recipients could refuse either, but risked receiving paper scrip instead.

While most Hard Times tokens were copper and of cent size, there were a few exceptions to this format, including those of Feuchtwanger's Composition, of which more will be said.

The Hard Times financial scenario continues....

The Situation in 1838

By the end of the year 1837, it was estimated that at least 618 banks had failed. Many of these had assets of dubious value, and some had no assets at all, except a printing press or, more likely, some bank note ordering forms from one or another of the engraving and printing firms that were all too eager to deliver as many notes as were requested. The country was awash in "broken bank" notes not worth the paper they were printed on. An estimated 39,000 citizens went bankrupt, $741 million was registered in business losses, and all but one textile mill in New England closed down.[3] Adding to the general misery was the failure of much of the nation's wheat crop, a cause of the New York City "Flour Riot" of the preceding February, leading to expensive importation from the Mediterranean area.

The year 1838 opened with generally unfavorable business conditions left over from the year before.

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[1] Adapted from extensive accounts in *Niles' National Register*, February 18 and 25, 1837. • Flour became plentiful later in the year; *e.g.*, as evidenced by this notice in *Niles' National Register*, November 25, 1837, p. 193: "Flour is arriving at New York by the canals at the rate of ten thousand barrels per day...."

[2] The Bank of the United States was active 1791-1811, and then was rechartered in 1816 for an additional 20 year period. In the early 1830s President Jackson campaigned against the perceived evils of this large and influential bank, which had many branches, and called for it to expire. In 1836 the charter lapsed, and the bank was reorganized under Pennsylvania law, with Nicholas Biddle, long associated with the institution in charge. In a series of bad management moves and fraudulent activities the Bank of the United States collapsed a few years later, wiping out the assets of many stockholders and depositors.

[3] Bucking the trend, Nathaniel Stevens expanded his textile operation production in North Andover, Massachusetts. His workers were on the job for 76 hours each week and earned an average of $4.50 per week plus $2 for room and board during that time.

A report on Massachusetts banks stated that some of the strongest institutions had just $1 in specie on hand for every $10 to $20 worth of their paper money in circulation, not an unusual situation. The Bircher Bank in Massachusetts had just $1 for every $25 of its currency. Many other banks had virtually no specie at all. Obviously, redemption in silver or gold coins of the millions of bank notes in circulation was impossible.

In the meantime, New York banks had been preparing for the resumption of specie payments by reducing their amount of paper money outstanding. The city was the financial center of America, and its lead often set an example for others. Strong New York City banks would help strengthen the entire Northeast. Weak New York City banks would have the opposite effect.

On April 15, 1838, a convention of 143 bankers met in New York City by invitation of the New York Bank to discuss the resumption; most wanted to delay this until January 1, 1839, but under state law payments had to resume on May 10, 1838. Specie payments did resume on May 10, 1838 in New York, and most other banks in the United States followed suit, except those in Philadelphia.[1]

The resumption was aided by the large-scale importation of British gold sovereigns to New York City, which by April 21, 1838 amounted to $500,000, augmented by over $4,000,000 the next week, part of a total of about $10,000,000.[2] After this was done, an imbalance in gold values of slightly more than 5% was adjusted, yielding a profit for the Bank of England and providing a security for American banks.

The United States Bank, now operating as a Pennsylvania corporation and no longer with its federal charter (which had expired in 1836), agreed to resume its specie payments on August 13, 1838. During the year 1838 trade improved, and conditions became somewhat better, although toward the end of the year more financial problems developed. In 1838 the United States Bank engaged in great speculation, which ultimately caused its downfall, and on October 10, 1839 it closed its doors. The entire banking system felt repercussions; 343 out of an estimated 850 banks in the country were said to have closed entirely and 62 partially. The U.S. government lost $2 million in deposits. The so-called Hard Times era lasted and banking difficulties were still widespread in the early 1840s, and it was not until 1843 that silver and gold coins were again readily available in circulation everywhere. For numismatic purposes, such as classifying "Hard Times tokens," the Hard Times era is said to have ended in 1844.[3]

The *Evening Chronicle* Begins in 1837

On May 10, 1837, when most leading eastern banks suspended the payment of coins in exchange for bills, James Gordon Bennett, prominent newspaper publisher, was planning to launch a new title. On May 22 the *Evening Chronicle* made its debut, with Lewis Feuchtwanger among its advertisers.

"We present to the public this afternoon the first number of the EVENING CHRONICLE," Bennett stated, continuing:

> It is the first evening paper that has been ever attempted in this country on the new system—*the cash or hard money system*—a system under which alone the newspaper press can ever attain hits highest dignity and influence among an intelligent people. Heretofore newspapers have been the rickety organs of particular cliques who had some particular interest in cheating the community out of their property, senses, reason or votes....
>
> The *Evening Chronicle* is founded on the hard money system throughout, and it will stand any revolution of commercial affairs. But more particularly is it intended to take the place of all the existing races of evening papers now extant in this city. In relation to social life and the improvement of the female sex, it will take a high, moral and intellectual stand, calculated to produce a lasting effect on the present and all future generations. Hitherto woman, in the folly and ignorance of man, has not occupied her most dignified position on the social scale. That time is now passing away.
>
> In all other respects the *Evening Chronicle* will be one of the most readable, interesting and amusing journals published in New York. Time will prove it.

No modest man, he. Bennett accused all other newspapers of being biased and cheating the public, with the *Evening Chronicle* poised to stand alone in its lofty ethics, while at the same time demolishing all competition.[4]

Bennett enjoyed watching pretty women as they walked along the promenade at the Battery at the southern tip of Manhattan, and sharing his observations with readers. He also answered their questions about life, romance, and other aspects. In this era there were three primary social issues: temperance, abolition of slavery, and women's rights. It seems that Bennett's publication might well be studied for information in the last-named category.

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[1] Pennsylvania lagged considerably and, for example, it was not until March 18, 1842, that the prestigious Bank of North America, in Philadelphia, resumed specie payments.

[2] *Niles' National Register,* April 21 and 28, 1838.

[3] And to have begun in 1832, an initial date that is not even approximately correct! It seems that a true bracketing of the Hard Times era would be 1837-1843.

[4] The life of Bennett (1795-1872) is extensively chronicled in the *Dictionary of American Biography* and other standard sources.

Bennett had no lack of exposure for his views on various subjects, as at the same time he published the *Morning Herald, Weekly Herald,* and *Weekly Chronicle.* In the interest of "efficiency" some years ago the Library of Congress deaccessioned its set of the *Evening Chronicle* deposited there by Bennett at the time of publication.[1] By a series of fortuitous events, Volume I, beginning with issue no. 1, May 22, 1837, fell into my hands (as part of a transaction with a dealer in such items, who also supplied a large pile of ex-Library of Congress newspapers from 1838).

Among the Advertisers on May 22, 1837

The very first issue of the *Evening Chronicle,* May 22, provides a view of the advertising of the aforementioned Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger. He used several different classified notices to state his various messages, the same being scattered throughout the advertising columns in the four-page sheet, here listed in the order in which they appeared:

> **CHEMICALS, &c.** 1,000 lbs. Sulphuric ether; 5,000 do [ditto] sweet spirits nitre; 5,000 do aqua ammonia; 1,000 do acetic ether; 1,000 do chloric do; 5,000 do liver sulphur.
>
> Likewise, luna caustic, prussic acid, diamond cement, red and green fireworks, mercurial and iodine preparations, all warranted pure, may be had at all times in any quantity, put in first rate shipping order, by
>
> DR. LEWIS FEUCHTWANGER, 2 Courtlandt St.

> **DUE BILLS.** As these are becoming generally in circulation, the subscriber will, in order to prevent counterfeiting, contract to furnish "Coins of his American Silver Composition," of the value of one shilling and upwards, or any specific value desired, to any establishment that may be disposed to contract for the same.
>
> DR. LEWIS FEUCHTWANGER, office, 2 Courtlandt St.

> **GUN MOUNTINGS.** 100 lbs. Of the newest pattern gun and rifle mountings made of German Silver, for sale by
>
> DR. LEWIS FEUCHTWANGER, 2 Courtlandt St.

> **5,000 SWEDISH LEECHES.** Just received and for sale wholesale and retail by
>
> DR. LEWIS FEUCHTWANGER, 2 Courtlandt St.

> **SWEDISH LEECHES.** A constant supply of Swedish Leeches on hand, for sale by
>
> DR. LEWIS FEUCHTWANGER, 2 Courtlandt St.

> **10,000 LBS. GERMAN SUCCORY.** Just received and put up in packages, for sale by
>
> DR. LEWIS FEUCHTWANGER, 2 Courtlandt St.

> **REMOVAL.** Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger has removed from his old store, No. 377 Broadway, to No. 2 Courtlandt Street, near Broadway.[2]

In the same issue, the new occupant of Dr. Feuchtwanger's former location advertised:

> **KREOSOTE, FOR TOOTHACHE.** Prussian Cement, for filling decayed teeth. Diamond Cement for mending glass and china ware, constantly on hand and for sale by
>
> J.A. L'AMOUREAUX & CO.
> Successors to Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger[3]
> No. 377 Broadway

> **A CARD.** JAS. A.E. L'AMOUREAUX & CO. having succeeded Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger in his store, No. 377 Broadway, will continue to furnish the public with the articles usually supplied by him, and hope, by their efforts, to secure a continuance of its patronage.
>
> Swedish Leeches, Diamond Cement, Prussian Cement, for filling decayed teeth; Chicory; the finer chemical preparations; Magnesia Lozenges, cough Lozenges, &c., &c., constantly on hand, and for sale on the most reasonable terms, wholesale and retail.

Dr. Feuchtwanger was not without competition in his purveying of German silver articles, as this advertisement in the same issue reveals:

> **GERMAN SILVER.** Fish and butter Knives, Sugar Tongs, Spoons, Forks, and Ladles, of various patterns, all of superior quality, and warranted wrought for sale by the manufacturer. The subscriber originally introduced the above ware, and has been established nearly five years in this city, and was awarded the first

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[1] In spring 1837 other daily papers included: *Mercantile Advertiser and New York Almanac, Morning Courier and New York Enquirer, New York Daily Express, New York Gazette and General Advertiser, New York Journal of Commerce, New York Times* (different from the later *New York Times;* the *Times* of 1837 was "discontinued for lack of support" in November of that year; cf. *Niles' National Register,* October 28, 1837, p. 130), *New York Evening Post, New York Evening Star, New American, New York Commercial Advertiser, New York Herald, New York American, New York Commercial Advertiser, New York Herald, New Era, New York Transcript,* and *New York Sun.* The last-named became well known for its fanciful, fictitious accounts of phenomena and events.

[2] This announcement had been published earlier elsewhere.

[3] Who at his new 2 Courtlandt Street address also advertised Kreosote during this time (*e.g.,* the *Evening Chronicle,* June 13, 1837, and other issues). Kreosote seems to have been compounded by R.H. Coleman & Co., Baltimore, and distributed widely (cf. notice by N.B. Graham in the June 29, 1837, issue of the *Evening Chronicle;* Graham, located at 90 Nassau Street, New York, was also an agent for Kreosote and described the alleged properties of the product in detail).

> premium for the best specimens of German Silver Goods by the American Institute at their late Fair.
>
> German Silver Coffin Plates engraved at one hour's notice. Price from $1.25 to $2 each, engraving included.
>
> N.B. The prices of the above articles are about 75 per cent cheaper than the real silver.
>
> WM. CHANDLESS, Manufacturer,
> 6 Clarkson Street,
> Between Varick and Hudson street.

The making of implements from German silver seems to have attracted a Connecticut entrepreneur, as evidenced by this notice published in the *New York Journal of Commerce*:[1]

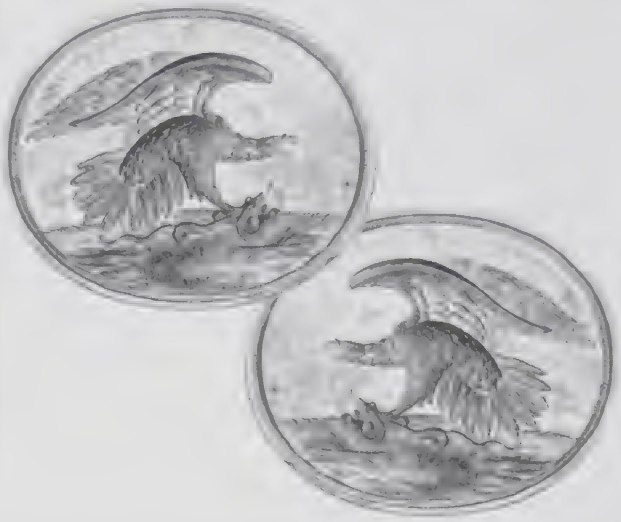
> Domestic industry. In the vicinity of Middletown, Connecticut, is a new and flourishing establishment for the manufacture of locks, and the various ornaments for doors, &c. The great excellence and beauty of the articles here manufactured are such as will be likely to command the attention of architects.
>
> *Argentina* is the name given by the manufacturer of the alloy that resembles silver, which is made into knobs and furniture for doors, shutters, &c. It has all the whiteness of silver, does not tarnish by exposure. The ornaments made of this material are now greatly esteemed. It will undoubtedly supersede, in a great measure, for use of brass furniture; and prove to be a cheap and elegant substitute for silver.

Later Items in the *Evening Chronicle*

Most advertisements in Bennett's *Evening Chronicle* ran multiple times, often several weeks or longer. Now and again changes were made in Feuchtwanger's announcements. Various products were advertised by Feuchtwanger and, often, also by L'Amoureaux, these including Harlem Oil imported from Haarlem, Holland; platina metal[2]; Nitrate Barytes, and Nitrate Strontian, among many others.

The issue of May 24 included these listings relating to tokens:

> **GERMAN SILVER.** In Sheets, Ingots and Wire, for sale in quantities to suit purchasers, by
>
> DR. LEWIS FEUCHTWANGER, 2 Courtlandt St.
>
> **NOTICE.** To Rail Road and Steamboat Companies, Hotels, and other public establishments. The subscriber is prepared to make contracts for furnishing any establishment with Cards, representing a due bill of any value and to any amount, in his American Silver Composition, and he will engage not only to put them on very reasonable terms, but to redeem them at fair value. Apply to
>
> DR. LEWIS FEUCHTWANGER, 2 Courtlandt St.



Could this be the inspiration for Feuchtwanger's eagle-killing-snake design? Shown is a seal or medal die cut before 1805 by British engraver John Milton. Two views are shown: the die as made, with the feature intaglio; and with the image reversed to show the eagle's head facing left, as it would appear on a seal or medal struck from Milton's die.

Impressions of medals or seals from Milton's die are sufficiently rare that the writer has never seen one. However, the motif became well known in numismatics after Feuchtwanger copied it for use on his interesting series of 1837 cents. (Author's collection, ex Jonathan Kern Collection)

The "cards" were what numismatists call *store cards*, or metallic tokens. Feuchtwanger offered to supply them in any amount requested and, moreover, to redeem them "at fair value." Presumably, these were the 1837-dated tokens marked on the reverse, FEUCHTWANGER'S COMPOSITION (thus furnishing information as to where holders could redeem them, as his emporium was well known), and of denominations of one cent and three cents.

The cents were smaller than the contemporary federal copper issues and were about the size of a later Flying Eagle or other small cent (or the Lincoln cent of today). The metallic composition was bright, causing Feuchtwanger and others to call them "silver pennies." On the obverse an eagle was depicted, killing a snake, with the date 1837 below. The edges were reeded.[3] The origin of the motif it not known to me, but it was antedated and perhaps inspired by a die cut by British medallist and gem engraver, John Milton, who flourished in the trade from about 1760 to 1802 and died on February 10, 1805.[1] Of course, it is possible that the design was not original with Milton and is from some still earlier source.

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[1] Cited in *Niles' Weekly Register*, July 22, 1837, p. 336.

[2] Platinum metal; however, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, *platina* was occasionally used to refer to a type of yellow bronze, and, for the Spanish, to silver (although *plata* or *plate* were words most often used).

[3] These are catalogued today as Low-120, per the numbering system devised by Lyman H. Low at the turn of the twentieth century and described in his book, *Hard Times Tokens*. Over a dozen different dies (obverse and reverse combined) were made for these tokens, indicating a large coinage at the time.

The three-cent pieces were larger, about the size of a quarter dollar, and had two different obverses: an eagle and the State Arms of New York, each with the date 1837 below. On June 14, 1837, this notice was published, indicating that "certain values" or denominations could be purchased.

> **PROPOSALS TO TRADER AND STORE KEEPERS.** The subscriber offers to all who are in want of small change, to furnish them with "Tokens" of the American Silver Composition representing certain values, the cost not exceeding $25 for which 500 will be furnished to prevent counterfeiting, and for further particulars apply to
>
> DR. LEWIS FEUCHTWANGER, 2 Courtlandt St.

Today, the only known regular denominations issued by Feuchtwanger are the cent and three-cent pieces.[2] The "cost not exceeding $25" for 500 pieces, equal to five cents each, might indicate that five-cent or even 12½ cent ("bit") denominations were contemplated, but none are known today. The above advertisement ran only briefly, perhaps because custom orders were not forthcoming.

On another subject, the following notice appeared on June 19 and ran in many issues:

> **$2,000 WANTED.** On bond and mortgage, for a city property, worth more than double the money. Apply immediately to 2 Courtlandt Street.

Although 2 Courtlandt Street was the address of Feuchtwanger, his was not the only business enterprise there, as evidenced by this notice of June 24, perhaps by the seeker of the aforementioned $2,000?:

> **TO THE PUBLIC.** In this, the age of puffery and shin plasters, when Cafes d'Hotes, Restaurants, and numerous other establishments with their foreign titles are twinkling themselves into notoriety, I would beg leave to invite the attention of connoisseurs, epicures, and the public in general to an establishment conducted upon a somewhat smaller scale, but on a principle as broad and firm as any, viz., honesty and fair dealing.
>
> It is that neat establishment, No. 2 Courtlandt St., kept by T. Cody, whose natural good humor and pleasantry of deportment, and assiduity to please, has become proverbial. Those that are fond of "good cheer" should give him a call, for there are at all hours to be found oysters and every variety of fish fresh from their element; also game, spiced meats, pickles, &c., &c., served up in all the various forms of cookery that ingenuity can devise.
>
> At his bar may be had choice wines, ales, liquors, segars, &c., and every thing in season. Regularity and cleanliness is the order of the day in his establishment. His motto is "Live and let live," and as the anniversary of our National Independence approaches, which calls to memory those "times that tried men's souls," and is looked upon as the time to "eat, drink, and be merry."
>
> Those that are so disposed cannot find a place better suited to their mind than the above mentioned—for there in addition to gentlemanly attendance, they will find good entertainment, and all the necessary requisites that characterize our houses of higher fame.
>
> AN EPICURE.

As to the relationship between Dr. Feuchtwanger and restaurateur Cody the author knows little, except that 2 Courtlandt Street must have been a very interesting and worthwhile place to visit.

Small Paper Notes

The shortage of coins remained critical in the East after the May 10 suspension of specie payments, and while Feuchtwanger and a few others were issuing tokens, far more activity took place in the printing and passing of paper scrip notes, popularly called "shin plasters." These were less expensive than tokens to produce and were more convenient to handle. Sample advertisements of currency printers or outlets:

> SPECIE. ONE DOLLAR NOTES! Tradesmen, storekeepers, &c., may be supplied with engraved forms for One Dollar, and fifty Cent notes, from plates just completed, equal in style and appearance to current bank bills. The wording entitles the bearer on demand to one dollar value in goods, or negotiable bank notes, which, when endorsed by responsible parties, will obviate the present difficulty with regard to small change, by their ready circulation in the neighborhood of the issuer.
>
> Apply to J. LATHAM, Engraver and Painter, 160 Greenwich St., near Courtlandt St.
>
> Those leaving for the country will find them worth their attention to purchase for sale in the various towns.
>
> Also, tickets from 6¼ to 50 cents, from engraved plates, at a low rate.
>
> WANTED IMMEDIATELY. Two or three active young men to show specimens and take orders for the above, for which a liberal commission will be given.[3]

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[1] Cf. *Biographical Dictionary of Medallists*, L.S. Forrer, 1909, Vol. IV, pp. 82-85.

[2] In addition, a Feuchtwanger cent obverse was combined with a reverse die for R.E. Russell, and presumably issued by Russell, with a denomination of 12½ cents (later discussed here).

[3] Published in the *Evening Chronicle*, May 22, 1837 (inaugural issue), and other issues.

> **SMALL NOTES—SMALL NOTES—SMALL NOTES.** The increasing demand for small notes for change has induced the subscriber to engrave an entire new set of plates on steel, of the denomination of $1, 75, 50, 37½, 25, 12½, and 6¼ cents. These notes are elegantly engraved with vignettes, &c., in a bank note form, and printed on bank note paper, payable at sight to bearer in trade or current bank bills.
>
> The above notes are now ready for delivery to store keepers, hotels, steamboats, manufacturers, and tradesmen of every description.
>
> Orders from any part of the United States will be promptly attended to, by applying at
>
> VALENTINE'S Engraving and Printing Rooms,
> 50 John St., cor. William, New York.[1]

> **SMALL NOTES—SMALL NOTES—SMALL NOTES.** For change, engraved expressly for storekeepers, hotels, tradesmen, manufacturers, &c., to supply the present scarcity of specie. The great demand for these notes have made it necessary to engrave an entire new set on Steel Plates, with beautiful vignettes, the high finish of which renders them secure from counterfeit. Notes for $1, 75, 50, 37½, 25, and 12½ cents, printed on bank note paper, equal to bank bills in appearance and beauty, payable to bearer at sight in trade for bankable bills. The above notes are now ready for delivery. Orders from any part of the United States will be promptly attended to, on application to
>
> J. NEALE, Engraver and Printer,
> 6 John St., 5 doors from Broadway.
>
> N.B.: Tradesmen and country merchants are invited to call and see specimens previous to making their purchases.[2]

Such small-denomination paper notes flooded commerce. A notice in *Niles' National Register,* June 24, 1837, described several varieties observed, stating that "Some of the notes are embellished with pictures of hogs, portraits of individuals, &c., and carried these inscriptions:

> The bearer will be entitled to FIFTY CENTS VALUE IN REFRESHMENTS, at the Auction Hotel, 123 and 125 Water Street. New York, May, 1837. Charles Redabock.
>
> TONTINE COFFEE HOUSE. Good for TWENTY-FIVE CENTS in refreshments. Caldwell & Kenyon.
>
> Good to the bearer for TWELVE AND A HALF CENTS at the Merchant's Coffee House, 122 Water Street. Henry Elder.
>
> GOOD FOR FIFTY CENTS. New York. Fifty Cents. Payable in bankable bills or refreshments. DOWNING'S REFECTORY, No. 5 Broad St. Thomas Downing.
>
> INDEPENDENCE COFFEE HOUSE. 289 Broadway. Good for 6¼ cents.
>
> BANK COFFEE HOUSE. No. 39 Pine Street. GOOD FOR 6¼ CENTS In Refreshments. Earle & Fossett.
>
> GOOD AT NICKERSON'S. No. 25 Pine Street. FOR 12½ CENTS. J.H. Nickerson.
>
> GOOD FOR 12½ CENTS. At Horn's Custom House Hotel. J. Horn, Jun.
>
> I promise on demand to pay the bearer FOUR SHILLINGS. Endorsed by H. Atkins. Alex. Welsh.
>
> FIFTH WARD HOTEL. GOOD FOR TWENTY-FIVE CENTS. 25 Cents. Thomas Riley.[3]
>
> ASTOR HOUSE. TWENTY-FIVE CENTS. S. & F. Boyden.[4]

A Closer Look at the Tokens

By late summer 1837, Feuchtwanger seems to have turned away from issuing tokens, to concentrate on his regular business of supplying drugs, metals, "apparatus for performing magical and optical experiments," patent medicines, and other goods. Leeches, used for "bleeding" to reduce swelling and to drain infections, were a popular item at the time, and advertisers in the *Evening Chronicle* vied to present the claims of Swedish (as Feuchtwanger, L'Amoureaux, and certain others sold) vs. Greek vs. Turkish leeches.[5]

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[1] Published in the *Evening Chronicle,* June 12, 1837, and other issues.

[2] Published in the *Evening Chronicle,* June 20, 1837, and other issues.

[3] The Fifth Ward Hotel, established in 1826 and later known as the Fifth Ward Museum Hotel, was located at the corner of West Broadway and Franklin Street. Four stories in height, the hotel had a dining saloon on the first floor and a large museum display on the second. In front of the building was a headless statue of King George III, so damaged by patriots in the Revolutionary War. The establishment issued a token (No. 249 in *United States Store Cards. A List of Merchants' Advertising Checks, Restaurant Checks, and Kindred Pieces Issued from 1789 up to Recent Years, Including Many of the Tokens Which Passed as Money and Known as Hard Times Tokens,* compiled by Edgar H. Adams, 1920) denominated as 2/6, or two shillings, sixpence, or about a half dollar. Thomas Riley was a numismatist and was a bidder for coins in the Bangs & Brother June 6, 1855 sale, *Catalogue of a Valuable Collection of American and Foreign Coins and Medals in Gold, Silver, Copper and Bronze.* Riley died in 1858. On January 13, 1864, many of his items were sold via a catalogue prepared by J.K. Curtis and offered by A.J. Bleecker & Co., New York City auctioneers. The artifacts were arranged into 1,067 (or 1,097 with addenda) lots in the 32-page *Catalogue of the Celebrated, Valuable and Rare Collection of Coins, Medals, Autographs, Continental Paper Money of the Late Mr. Thomas Riley of the Fifth Ward Museum Hotel, New York.*

[4] The Astor House, not far from the American Museum, was generally regarded as the finest hotel in the city. G.M. Davison, *The Traveller's Guide,* 1837, p. 118: "Astor House, Broadway, near St. Paul's Church. This building, erected by John Jacob Astor, is composed almost entirely of eastern granite, and presents a most noble and imposing appearance. It contains 390 rooms and can accommodate about 300 guests."

[5] One purveyor, Peter Burnett, avowed that the Swedish creatures were best: "Where children are required to be leeched, the above

Presumably, by this time most of the trade for substitute money was being filled by the much cheaper printed notes, which continued to be advertised by various printers and vendors. By this time, probably more than a million of Feuchtwanger's Composition one-cent pieces were in circulation and, perhaps, a few thousand of the three-cent tokens.

Today, the only tokens known with Feuchtwanger's name are the one-cent and three-cent denominations. In addition, several different varieties are known in German silver, but with the imprint of other entities, with only one—that of R.E. Russell—actually employing a Feuchtwanger *die* on one side.

Feuchtwanger's Petition to Congress

In late summer and autumn 1837 Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger spent much time and effort in trying to interest Congress in adapting his alloy to make coins. The new metal was said to have been "clean and white durable material, of specific value, from which coins and all articles can be advantageously manufactured as are now wrought out of silver."[1] His ideas were outlined in a petition dated September 13, bearing the heading, 25th Congress, Document No. 7, House of Representatives, 1st Session, titled "Substitute for Copper. Memorial Lewis Feuchtwanger." The text noted:

> That your memorialist after repeated labors, has succeeded in making and perfecting a metallic composition, known as German silver, of clean, white, and durable material, of specific value, from which coins and all articles can be advantageously manufactured, as are now wrought out of pure silver.
>
> Your memorialist proposes to your honorable body to substitute this composition for the copper currency of the country, by striking off pieces of the size of a dime, and of the value of one cent, specimens of which he has prepared for inspection.
>
> Your memorialist proposes to furnish this substitute for copper as cheaply as copper is now furnished to the Mint, and is confident that the "silver cent" thus proposed as a substitute for the cent pieces will be more acceptable, more portable, and would be more generally used in making up the fractional parts of a dollar.
>
> Your memorialist prays your honorable body to take the subject under your consideration, and, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Sen. Thomas Hart Benton, the most influential elected official regarding matters of American coinage during the 1830s. He was an advocate of improving coinage, and the landmark Coinage Act of June 28, 1834, which reduced the authorized weight of gold coins to permit them to circulate for the first time in a generation, was largely his doing. In 1837 Benton endorsed the coinage alloy proposal of Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger, but Mint Director Robert Patterson replied that Feuchtwanger's composition was impractical. (*Dictionary of American Portraits*, Dover Publications, Inc.)

In Congress on September 13, Senator Thomas Hart Benton, of Missouri, presented Feuchtwanger's proposal "accompanied by specimens" for distribution to fellow legislators.[2]

To advance his proposal, the inventor prepared a "Circular," as it was titled, enclosing an example of a "silver penny" made of his American Silver, and with this text:[3]

> I submit for your consideration a specimen of a one-cent piece made of American Composition, known by the name of German Silver, equivalent in value to One Cent in Copper, which I propose with the authority of Congress, to substitute for the existing unclean and unhealthy Copper Currency by which a handsome current coin may be obtained answerable for the fractional parts of a Dollar, and acceptable in the operations of trade and local purchases.
>
> If this "Silver Penny" as I wish to have it designated shall be approved by Congress as a substitute for the one Cent pieces, I shall in that case, propose to remunerate the Mint for any loss sustained by the United States by the withdrawal of the Copper Coin. I am ready to contract for the delivery at the Mint of any amount of the Composition which Congress may authorize to be coined.
>
> Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger,
> New-York City

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leeches bite instantly, so that parents need not fear any extra suffering to their children" (*Evening Chronicle*, June 16, 1837).

[1] 25th Congress, Document No. 7, House of Representatives, 1st Session, titled "Substitute for Copper. Memorial Lewis Feuchtwanger, September 13, 1837."

[2] *Niles' National Register*, September 16, 1837, p. 41.

[3] Copy furnished by Kenneth E. Bressett.

It seems likely that the foregoing "Circular" as well as the proposal to Congress generated the following notices in the *U.S. Gazette*, Philadelphia, September 11 and 12, 1837:[1]

> **One Cent Pieces**
>
> Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger, of New York, has issued a German silver penny, milled at the edge, on one side a fine bold eagle, and the reverse a wreath, with the words, 'one cent,' with his name on the circle. It is of the intrinsic value of one cent, and about the size of a dime. They are a first rate substitute for small change. One hundred makes a dollar.
>
> **The Cent**
>
> A friend called on us yesterday, with a sample of M. Feuchtwanger's coin of "one cent" to which we referred to in our morning's paper. It was a beautiful piece of money, if it may be allowed such a title, much more convenient in every way than the copper coin; and should silver and gold ever come again in fashion, we think this kind of "cent" would be a very excellent attendant.

And this in the *Baltimore Sun*, October 24, 1837:[2]

> **Metallic Currency**
>
> The country is flooded with copper medals of nearly the size and weight of cents, most of them bearing devices and inscriptions defamatory of the general government; but many are mere advertisements of goods and wares in copper. There are two manufacturers of them in Boston, and a hundred are made for thirty-five cents, affording a very fair profit to the maker. Perhaps an emission of German silver cents might suppress them.

The idea continued to command the attention of Senator Thomas Hart Benton, who on October 14, 1837, wrote to Mint Director Robert M. Patterson to endorse the idea. On January 4, 1838, Patterson replied, in effect sounding the death knell for the petition:

> I had the honor to receive your letter of the 14th of October, accompanied by a "memorial of Lewis Feuchtwanger, praying Congress to substitute his invention, called German silver, in place of the copper coinage of the United States." On this memorial you ask my opinion, to be laid before the Committee on Finance of the Senate, at the present session.
>
> I have accordingly given to the matter my full consideration, and have been led to form an opinion unfavorable to the project of Dr. Feuchtwanger for reasons which I now proceed respectfully to lay before you....
>
> 7th. The last objection that I shall state is the uncertainty in the price of the German silver. Reckoning copper at 25 cents a pound, zinc at 5 cents, and nickel at 75 cents, the materials entering into a pound (avoirdupois) of Henninger's argentan would cost 28 cents, and of the Chinese packfong, analyzed by Engstom, only 24 cents. Now, our copper planchets cost us 32 cents per pound, and if the above estimate, from the ingredients, gives even an approximation to the true value of German silver, the only advantage promised from its substitution for copper in coinage is without foundation, for the weight of the coins could not be diminished. I know that the best imported German silver costs much more than the above estimate, but we cannot infer from this the price at which it could be made here on a large scale.
>
> Indeed, if the project of Dr. Feuchtwanger should be adopted, a great difficulty would be presented in determining the just weight to be given to the new coins. This specimen cent, which weighs 46 grains, would, at 28 cents a pound for the metal, be worth less than one-fifth of a cent, and to be of the professed value would require the metal to be worth $1.52 per pound.
>
> The memorial of Dr. Feuchtwanger seems to imply that the German silver is his "invention," and to suppose that, on this ground, he is to have a preference, at least, if not a monopoly, for the supply of the mint. It is scarcely necessary for me to state that there is no just foundation for either of these claims.
>
> On the whole, it is my decided opinion that it would not be proper to abandon our copper coinage in favor of the proposed substitute, and you will observe that, in presenting this opinion, I have not thought it necessary to bring to your view the many advantages belonging to the copper coinage; its profit to the Government, (the only pecuniary offset to the expense of the Mint), the hold which it has on the habits of the people, and the loss which would be sustained by its suppression, or the confusion which would arise from a double circulation of the same class.

His proposal rejected, perhaps at least in part because his asking price for the patent was said to have been $100,000 (although this was not specifically noted in the proposal), Feuchtwanger may have continued issuing his one-cent and three-cent pieces on a commercial basis, from dies dated 1837.

In the meantime, small-denomination federal coins were beginning to reappear in circulation, as per this item printed in the *Baltimore American* in November:[3]

> *Small change:* We learn with pleasure that the banks in New York and Philadelphia are paying out small change in specie for all fraction parts of checks below

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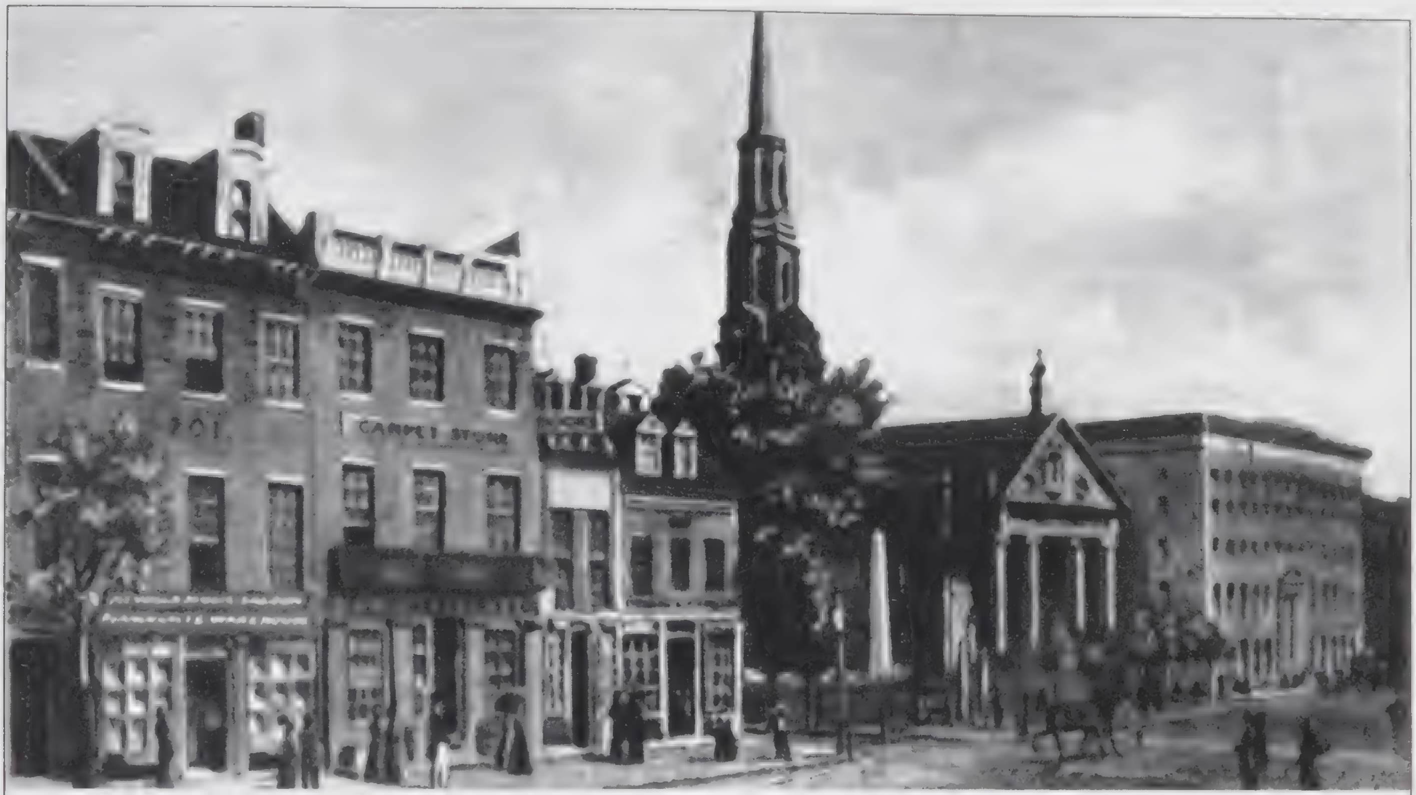
[1] As cited by Eric P. Newman in "The Promotion and Suppression of Hard Times Tokens, proceedings of the Coinage of the Americas Conference, American Numismatic Society, held October 29, 1994; published 1995, p. 124.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 125.

[3] Cited in *Niles' National Register*, November 11, 1837, p. 162.



View of Broadway, vista extending from Dey Street, including Fulton Street, to Barclay Street, circa 1843. The left side commences slightly more than a block north of Cortlandt Street, where Lewis Feuchtwanger located his business beginning in early 1837. Shown are St. Paul's Church and to its right, the Park View Hotel (Astor House). (*Glimpses of Old New-York,* Henry Collins Brown, privately printed, 1917)

> twenty-five cents....[1] The effect will be to exclude from circulation the miserable shin plasters of the denomination of $12^{1}/_{2}$ and $6^{1}/_{4}$ cents—the use of which is a source of endless vexation to all retailers.(We sincerely hope that some measure may be speedily fallen upon to prevent the circulation of paper of a less denomination than one dollar.

However, tokens remained plentiful in circulation, including the NOT ONE CENT varieties, as reported by the *New York Journal of Commerce* in the same month:[2]

> *Copper coin.* There are great quantities of copper pieces in the market which circulated as cents, but which are not so. They are generally too light; but the worst part of their construction is the bad metal they are made of, and their consequent tendency to become foul.[3]
>
> Worst of all, they are a vile debasement of the current coin, by which individuals very improperly make a large profit at public expense, their spurious coins being generally sold by the bushel, at 50 to $62^{1}/_{2}$ cents the hundred. They are all stamped with some device other than that of the national cent; for, to put on that would subject the operator to consequences not profitable.
>
> It is quite time for the public to refuse this trash altogether. [Small paper notes have all but disappeared, save one series.] The notes of the city of Newark are now the only notes which circulated freely in our market. All the notes of self-created loan companies, or by whatever other name they may go, are, and ought to be, rejected. We hope the same will pursued with the dirty "no cents" which are attempted to be put forth so plentifully.

Feuchtwanger's New York District in 1837

Broadway formed the center of Dr. Feuchtwanger's business activities in 1837. Early in the year he was located at 377 Broadway, many blocks north of the main commercial and financial districts. In the same year he relocated to 2 Cortlandt Street, around the corner from 177 Broadway.

At the time, Broadway ran north from Battery Place to Fourth Street. The stretch relevant to Feuchtwanger included the following street number references:

> 113 Broadway, on the corner of Thames Street.
>
> 133 Broadway, on the corner of Cedar Street
>
> **171 Broadway, on the corner of Cortlandt Street.** Courtlandt Street ran east from Broadway about the distance of two blocks (but without interruption) to Greenwich Street (No. 51 was the address

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[1] The term *specie* properly refers to silver and gold coins, not to copper. At the time the popular silver denominations "below twenty-five cents" consisted of the federal half dime and dime and silver Spanish-American medios ($6^{1}/_{4}$ cents) and bits ($12^{1}/_{2}$ cents).

[2] Quoted in *Niles' National Register,* November 25, 1837, p. 194.

[3] Not true. Most tokens were made of copper, some fewer of brass, and some of German silver—none of which metals became any more "foul" than did federal copper cents.

at the corner, on the south side, this being on the same side of the street and west of where Feuchtwanger was located), then for a block to Washington Street, then another block to West Street, at which last location there were piers on the Hudson River (popularly called the North River at the time). Feuchtwanger's premises at No. 2 Courtlandt Street were at the first door around the corner, on the south side of the street.

191 Broadway, on the corner of Dey Street

207 Broadway, on the corner of Fulton Street

229 Broadway, on the corner of Barclay

237 Broadway, on the corner of Park Place (opposite City Hall Park)

247 Broadway, on the corner of Murray Street (opposite City Hall Park).

260 Broadway, on the corner of Warren Street (opposite City Hall Park)

271 Broadway, on the corner of Chambers Street

287 Broadway, on the corner of Reade Street

301 Broadway, on the corner of Duane

333 Broadway, on the corner of Anthony Street

345 Broadway, opposite Catherine Lane

347 Broadway, on the corner of Leonard Street

379 Broadway, on the south corner of White Street. Feuchtwanger's location was one door south from the corner, at 377 Broadway.

399 Broadway, on the corner of Walker Street

Regarding Broadway, G.M. Davison, in *The Traveller's Guide through the Middle and Northern States*, 1837, noted this as part of his description of New York City:

> Broadway, the most splendid street in the city, runs through the centre and extends 3 miles in length and about 80 feet in width. It is the great and fashionable resort for citizens and strangers, and is much crowded during pleasant weather. In this avenue are Grade, Trinity, and St. Paul's churches, the Astor House, City Hotel, Congress Hall, American Hotel, Mansion House, Atlantic Hotel, Franklin House, Washington Hotel, and a variety of shops with elegant and extensive assortments of merchandise of every description.
>
> Opposite Trinity Church, Wall Street opens, which contains most of the banks, together with the principal part of the broker's and insurance offices.
>
> On passing up Broadway still further, is Courtlandt Street, which leads to the Hudson River, where the steam boats start for Albany.[1] At the foot of Courtlandt Street, also, is the ferry to Jersey City....

Numismatic Vignettes of 1837

Davison in his in *The Traveller's Guide* told of a local exhibit that featured coins.

> The New-York Historical Society in Chambers Street, corner of Broadway, has a library of 10,000 volumes, and a valuable collection of coins and minerals.
>
> Other attractions, including Peale's Museum and Gallery of the Fine Arts and the American Museum also had displays of coins among their other curiosities.[2]

The numismatic hobby was engaged in by only a few New York City residents at the time, and the identities of most are largely unknown today. John Allan, an accountant by profession, enjoyed buying, selling, and collecting coins and other historical items and was probably the first rare coin dealer in the city.[3] Among his customers was Philip Hone, a wealthy man who in 1826 served a term as mayor of the city.[4] Other clients in the 1820s included Pierre (or Peter) Flandin and Michael Moore, although little is known of their interests in 1837.[5]

Charles Cushing Wright, well-known engraver and die sinker, who in the early 1830s was a partner in the firm of Wright & Bale (which later became Bale & Smith), in 1831 gave lectures on classical coins and medals at the National Academy of Design at Clinton Hall in New York City. At the same Academy he mounted an exhibit which included a medal he had made of DeWitt Clinton.

Robert E. Bache, of Brooklyn, NY, was collecting coins by the 1820s, and in 1830 purchased a wooden cabinet in London to house them. At the time Brooklyn was a separate city, but was widely included in New York City directories, newspaper listings, etc. Later, it became a borough of New York. After Bache's death, his coins and storage cabinet were auctioned by W.E. Woodward.[1]

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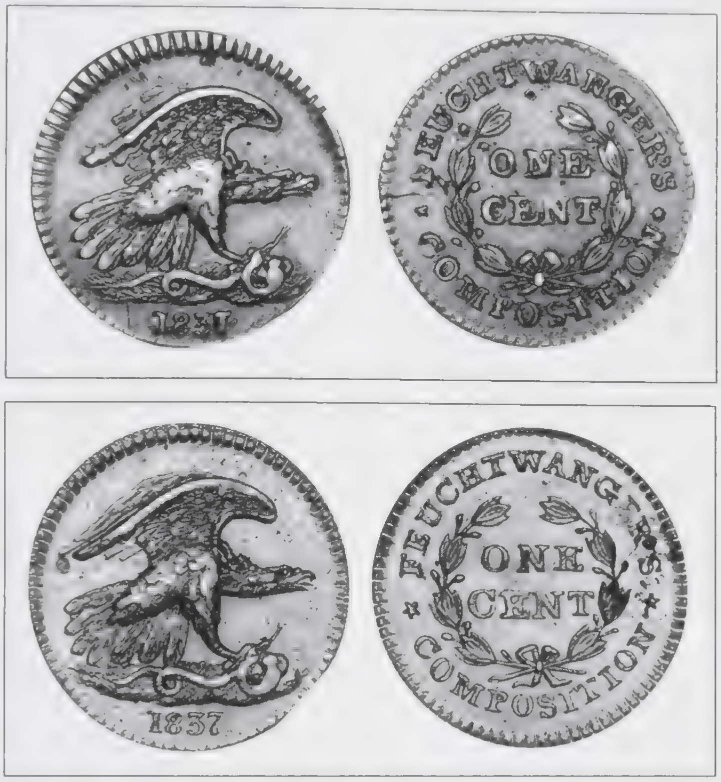
[1] Steamers departed daily at 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. Fare was $3 plus meals, and the 144-mile trip took 12 to 14 hours. • Thirty-six licensed stages, drawn by either two or four horses, traversed Broadway daily and generally charged 12½ cents fare, typically payable with a Spanish-American real or "bit"; in the city in 1837 there were 108 licensed stages totally.

[2] Also see Adventure No. 40.

[3] Born in Kilbernie, Ayrshire, Scotland, in 1777, John Allan emigrated to the United States and secured a position in New York City as a bookkeeper. In his house on Pearl Street, opposite Centre Street, and later (1837 until his death in 1863) in his home on Vandewater Street he greeted many visitors who shared his enthusiasm for numismatics and other collecting interests. Allan also illustrated various books including *Washington's Life* and Burns's *Poems*. Allan died in New York City on November 19, 1863, having been inactive in the hobby for the last several years of his life. Several varieties of tokens issued in the late 1850s and early 1860s bear his portrait on the obverse, in combination with various reverse dies.

[4] Philip Hone's mansion at 231 Broadway was well known in the early days and was featured in several sketches and paintings. The Woolworth Building was later constructed on the site. • Hone was a diarist, and his diaries were published by historian Alan Nevins.

[5] Moore: *American Journal of Numismatics*, June 1868, April 1874, and July 1888. • Flandin: *American Journal of Numismatics*, April 1874; notes his activity as taking place circa 1822-1827 and possibly other times as well. On June 6, 1855, his collection was auctioned by Bangs, Brother & Co., of the same city, the first truly notable numismatic sale held by what would become in various forms a very long-lived auction house.



Illustrations enlarged two diameters of two different die varieties of 1837 Feuchtwanger cents. The collecting of coins, medals, and tokens by variations in hand-cut dies is a fascinating pursuit. A close examination will reveal differences in the placement of the date, the position of the snake, and other obverse details, and in the relationship of letters with leaves and other features on the reverse. (Collection of the American Numismatic Society, New York)

Samuel J. Beebee, an exchange broker at 22 Wall Street, dealt in specie in 1837 and at a later date is known to have surveyed incoming items to select pieces of numismatic value, such as for Matthew A. Stickney in the early 1840s.[2] Several dozen other brokers plied their trade, often advertising to buy American half dollars, Spanish-American doubloons, or silver and gold coins in general.

Dozens of businesses distributed tokens and paper money in 1837. Among token-issuers was the New York and Harlaem (or Harlem) Railroad Company, chartered April 25, 1831, which in 1837 extended from Prince Street, in the Bowery in lower New York, through 4th Avenue to the Harlem River, with a branch line extending through 125th Street to Ninth Avenue, to the Hudson River at the Manhattanville Landing. In the year ending January 1837, fares collected amounted to $54,000.[3]

Feuchtwanger Cent Varieties of 1837

Hard Times tokens issued by Lewis Feuchtwanger, ONE CENT denomination, struck in Feuchtwanger's metal, reeded edge (except 7-J, silver, plain edge).[4] It seems likely that these tokens were made from finished planchets supplied by Feuchtwanger. Feuchtwanger is believed to have had complete facilities for rolling strips from ingots and for punching planchets from the strips.

The collecting of 1837 cents by die varieties has captured the interest and imagination of many numismatists over the years, including in recent times many readers of Russell Rulau's books on Hard Times and other tokens, which describe the die details. I invite you to either read the *technicalities* below, or simply skip ahead to more easily absorbed "reading material." It's your choice.

Obverse 1: "*Coarse denticles. Large date close to ground above, the 3 exceptionally large, the 7 very high.* Snake's tongue almost vertical. Seven tail feathers, four of them touching the ground." ••• Notes: Ground cover mostly in lines and curves extending on a slant to right, similar to grass. Feathers deeply mingled with ground cover details. In back below wing, four feathers with angled ends, sharpest at bottom of each; top feather slightly doubled. Eagle's wing not firmly attached to body; separated by small plain area. Back loop of snake: more or less circular in shape; centered over left side of 8. A very distinctive die. ••• Known combinations: 1-A.

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[1] Sale conducted December 19, 1865, and the next several days. The wooden cabinet appeared as Lot 2678 in the catalogue.

[2] The firm later became known as Beebee, Parshall & Co. (22½ Wall Street, in the early 1840s), then still later as Ludlow, Beebee & Co.

[3] Certain information is from *New-York As It Is, in 1837* and the companion publication, *The Classified Mercantile Directory for the Cities of New-York and Brooklyn*, New York: J. Disturnell, 1837; in addition to other directories of the period. • The 1831 charter was for 25 years. 1837 data: Capital: $1,150,000; shares $50 each; annual election, first Tuesday in July. Abraham R. Lawrence, president. Head office at 18 Wall Street. Ticket office at 241 Bowery; branch ticket office at the corner 86th Street and Fourth Avenue. Cars departed every 20 minutes from the Bowery, opposite Prince Street, for the seven-mile run to Harlem.

[4] Notes are by the author. Particularly unusual features are italicized. • Certain information from: Lyman H. Low, *Hard Times Tokens*, 1900 • Russell Rulau, *Standard Catalog of U.S. Tokens 1700-1900* (quoted text within quotation marks). • "Varieties of the Feuchtwanger Cent," *Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine*, November 1957, adapted from *Numisma*, published by the New Netherlands Coin Co., August 1956. • James Theodore Koutsoures, "The Identification of Feuchtwanger Cents, Low 120," undated.

Obverse 2: "Similar treatment of the eagle to preceding. In date 18 low, small, closely spaced; 37 much larger, higher, also closely spaced. Eight tail feathers, five touching ground." ••• Notes: 1 (1837) low and with large flag extending horizontally to left; 8 higher and with central part curving upward (making the bottom part of the 8 appear more or less like a circle, but thicker at the bottom; and the top part of the 8 resembling a horseshoe attached to the bottom part); 3 very large and with its top level with the smaller 7 to its right; 1 is distant from ground above it, 8 is closer, 3 is next, and upper right of 7 is closest. The ground above the 3 and the left side of the 7 curves upward, so as to create a larger space below. *Grass is wavy or billowy and generally slants upward to the right. On the eagle's neck there are two raised bars, slanting down to the left and extending slightly into the field.* Of the tail feathers, four large feathers are delineated with their tips touching the ground, after which the fifth feather is not as well formed and may consist of two smaller feathers touching ground. In back below wing, four feathers, the lowest being somewhat indistinct. Back loop of snake: More or less circular in shape; above 8. ••• Known combinations: 2-A.

Obverse 3: "Date closely spaced, from smaller punches as on all to follow, and in a straight line on top. The 7 frequently shows crumbling between horizontal and upright; rim breaks down at lower rights. Seven tail feathers, first two and fourth (latter recut) touching ground." ••• Notes: *Ground resembles pine branches.* In back below wing, three feathers with vane details, center shortest; traces of partial feather between top two. Back loop of snake: more or less circular, prominent beadlike segments evident, centered over left side of 8. Tops of 183 in more or less a straight line; top of 7 slightly higher. ••• Known combinations: 3-B, 3-C, 3-D, 3-E, 3-G.

Obverse 4: "In date 3 low, rather distant from 7 and often joined to it at top by a line. *Loop in snake's tail left of date;* in all other dies loop is above 18. Snake's tongue very long, very deeply forked. Eagle's head droops. Eight tail feathers, three touching ground." ••• Notes: In back below wing, five shallow feathers, the top two directed slightly upward and the bottom three slightly downward; in front of (to the right) there are four bold feathers. Back loop of snake: somewhat flattened; *centered to the left of 1;* a very distinctive diagnostic feature. ••• Known combinations: 4-F.

Obverse 5: "Date widely and evenly spaced; *slightly curved bar in ground directly above 83.* Seven tail feathers, only the second barely touching ground; fourth recut at tip." ••• Notes: Ground resembles pine branches, but not as closely as Obverse 3. 1st feather very close to ground above coil of snake, no vegetation in this area. In back below wing, six feathers with more or less rectangular ends; some slight vane details on feathers 2, 3, and 4. *Small curved line extends below bottom of leading edge of eagle's wing on right.* Back loop of snake: more or less circular, prominent beadlike segments evident; centered over space between 1 and 8, and closer to 1. ••• Known combinations: 5-G, 5-H.

Obverse 6: "Closely spaced date, bottoms in a straight line; 83 a little apart. Dash to left from upper serif of 1. *Base of eagle's neck smooth.* Seven tail feathers, four of them touching ground." ••• Notes: From front, feathers 1, 2, and 4 touch ground; 3 close to ground and touched by a sprig, but does not touch ground. In back below wing, three larger rectangular feather ends (no vanes on feathers), from large to shorter, then with two smaller and not well defined short feathers. Tiny thorn to left from top of upper left serif on 1. At right side of ground is a sprig with three branches. Back loop of snake: more or less circular, prominent beadlike segments evident; centered over space between 1 and 8. ••• Known combinations: 6-G, 6-I, 6-RER (Russell).

Obverse 7: Unknown to Rulau. ••• Notes: 18 (1837) low, 3 high, 7 highest. Snake's tongue very short. Tail feather 1 embedded in top of coil of snake, feathers 2 and 3 touch ground, 3 close but with small plain space intervening. In back below wing, three feathers with vane details (superficially resembling these details in Obverse 3, but with differences). Details of back wing (above top edge of front wing) incomplete. Eagle with very long tongue. Back loop of snake: more or less circular, prominent beadlike segments evident, centered over space between 1 and 8, closer to 8; somewhat similar to Obverse 3, but with important differences. A very distinctive die. ••• Known combinations: 7-J.

Reverse A: "ONE very widely spaced. Small O's in COMPOSITION. A and P recut." ••• Notes: *Ends of branch stems spoon-shaped;* left stem grazes upper left of P (COMPOSITION); P repunched. Letters widely spaced in border inscriptions. ONE widely spaced; E broken at top. C (CENT) high; T low. ••• Berry positions: Left outside berries opposite: Slightly right of center of C / field to left of F / under left upright of U. • Right outside berries opposite: O / above center of star / lower right of E. ••• Known combinations: 1-A, 2-A.

Reverse B: "*Stems end in marked claws.* S in COMPOSITION very defective at top. Upright of F recut. N in COMPOSITION recut." ••• Notes: ••• AN (FEUCHTWANGER'S) close or touch. Top of S (COMPOSITION) patched; IT nearly touch; upper right of T below adjacent I. *1st left inside berry has two stems.* ••• Berry positions: Left outside berries opposite: Right center of C / slightly right of center of upright of F / below left part of C. • Right outside berries opposite: Left upright of N / center of S / space between GE. ••• Known combinations: 3-B.

Reverse C: "Star too close to final S. in FEUCHTWANGER'S. Two upper berries within right branch arise from innermost leaves almost at tips." ••• Notes: C and F are the only two reverses not illustrated by Koutsoures. ••• Known combinations: 3-C.

Reverse D: "O in ONE too low. Right bow plainly overlaps left one. Right ribbon almost touches both S and I." ••• Notes: AN (FEUCHTWANGER'S) close or touch. MP (COMPOSITION) and ITI close. ••• Berry positions: Left outside berries opposite: Space between CO / upright of F / right upright of U. • Right outside berries opposite: Upper left tip of N / slightly right of center of S / space between GE. ••• Known combinations: 3-D.

Reverse E: "IT about touch. E in ONE, T in CENT (left top) and P in COMPOSITION clearly recut N's in ONE CENT crumble." ••• Notes: Right ribbon tip just past upper right of S (COMPOSITION). ••• Berry positions: Left outside berries opposite: Upper serif of C upright of F / left side of C. • Right outside berries opposite: Upper left tip of N / slightly right of the center of S / lower left tip of E. ••• Known combinations: 3-E (struck first), 4-E (struck last).

Reverse F: "ER joined at bases. Left stem, divided like a pen point, touches M." ••• Notes: C and F are the only two reverses not illustrated by Koutsoures. ••• Known combinations: 4-F.

Reverse G: "Thirteen berries, *the extra one just right of bow.* Berry near base of T in CENT attached to a leaf. Star too close to final N in COMPOSITION. Stems end in claws though not too distinctly. M P O spaced apart. Develops a crack through HTWANG, and another from wreath through final N to edge. N in ONE crumbles at base." ••• Notes: ••• Berry positions: Left outside berries opposite: Right serif of C / left edge of upright of F / right edge of upright of U. • Right outside berries opposite: Upper left tip of left side of N / bottom serif of S / lower right of G. ••• Known combinations: 3-G, 5-G, 6-G.

Reverse H: "Thirteen berries, extra one just left of bow. E in ONE top high at top and base. Crude recutting NE CEN; crumbling develops on these letters." ••• Notes: GER (FEUCHTWANGER'S) close or touch. ••• Berry positions: Left outside berries opposite: Center of C / center of F / left edge of C. • Right outside berries opposite: Slightly left of center of N / slightly right of serif of S / center of G. ••• Known combinations: 5-H.

Reverse I: "Thirteen berries, extra one just left of bow, and looking more like an extra stem. E in CENT heavily recut. E in ONE high at base but in line with N at top." ••• Notes: EU (FEUCHTWANGER'S) widely spaced; base of W significantly lower than left foot of A; R weak at top. ••• Berry positions: Left outside berries opposite: Center of C / upright of F / left part of C. • Right outside berries opposite: Left upright of N / lower left serif of S / center of G. ••• Known combinations: 6-I.

Reverse J: Unlisted by Rulau. ••• Notes: A carefully made die, wide spacing of border letters, good alignment, and with delicate features. ••• Berry positions: Left outside berries opposite: Center of C / right side of upright of F / left of C. • Right outside berries opposite: Left upright of N / center of S / space between GE and slightly closer to E. ••• Known combinations: 7-J

Reverse RER: R.E. RUSSELL at top border. Three stars to each side, the center star being largest. Near bottom border, 12½ c, with three stars below (the center one being larger). At center, three rosettes (center one larger) below which is I • O • U. ••• Notes: Some letters of RUSSELL repunched. Rightmost rosette double punched at left. 2 (12) with ball; 1 in denominator of fraction small and irregularly shaped. ••• Known combinations: 6-RER.

Die Combinations of 1837 Feuchtwanger Cents

1-A: R-4 ••• Notes: Prominent raised mound in field above eagle's talon. [Low-120; Rulau HT-268]

2-A: R-5 ••• Notes: Perfect dies. [Low-120; Rulau HT-268]

3-B: R-3 ••• Notes: Perfect dies. [Low-120; Rulau HT-268]

3-C: R-8 ••• Notes: [Low-120; Rulau HT-268]

3-D: R-7 ••• Notes: Perfect dies. [Low-120; Rulau HT-268]

3-E: R-3 ••• Notes: *Early state:* Line (perhaps an engraving scratch) from lowest inside right berry up to right to leaf. *Late state:* 7 (1837) filled at left; rim crumbled at lower right. Reverse as preceding, but also with inside top of C (COMPOSITION) filled. [Low-120; Rulau HT-268]

3-G: R-6 ••• Notes: [Low-120; Rulau HT-268]

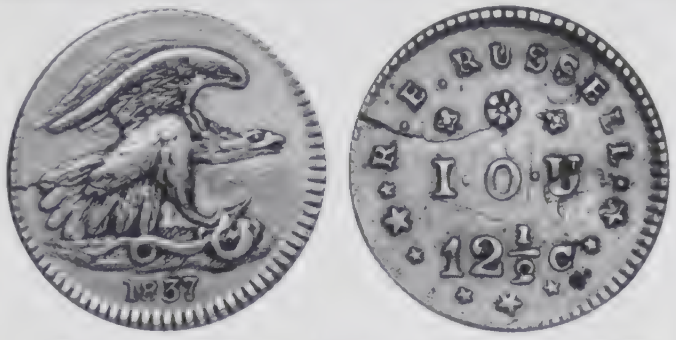
4-E: R-3 ••• Notes: Line (perhaps an engraving scratch) from lowest inside right berry up to right to leaf. Inside top of C (COMPOSITION) filled; crack from tip of lowest right outside leaf to left serif at upper right stand of N. Later state of die E than seen on 3-E, and thus the last struck. [Low-120; Rulau HT-268]

4-F: R-8 ••• Notes: [Low-120; Rulau HT-268]

5-G: R-2 ••• Notes: Tiny crack from rim to top of eagle's wing near left part of wing [not confirmed]. Reverse Die State I: Perfect die. Reverse Die State II: Crack from wreath through left upright of N (COMPOSITION) to edge; this on about half of the extant pieces seen. On this die state a raised curved line develops at lower right of O (ONE), resembling a repunching. Reverse Die State III: Latest state seen. Lowest inside left and second lowest inside right berries repunched to make them larger; lowest inside left now has a hook or thorn projecting from it. Die crack from stem above first O (COMPOSITION) through tops of POSI. Rare. [Low-120; Rulau HT-268]

5-H: R-1 ••• Notes: Die deterioration sequence: Reverse Die State I: No cracks, no filling at N (CENT); not seen. Reverse Die State II: N (CENT) thick, filled at upper right. Reverse Die State III: N (ONE) mostly fills in. Reverse Die State IV: Most of rest of N (CENT) fills in. [Low-120; Rulau HT-268]

6-G: R-2 ••• Notes: Perfect dies. [Low-120; Rulau HT-268]



The 1837 R.E. Russell 12½ cent token, variety 6-RER shown 2x. (Collection of the American Numismatic Society, New York)

6-I: R-1 ••• Notes: Obverse with faint small vertical die crack in field, top of which begins opposite upper right of snake's head [not confirmed]. • Reverse Die State I: Slightly filling at upper interior of left of N (CENT). Slightly scarcer than the following, but readily available. Reverse Die State II: As preceding, plus small extension from upper right serif of N; blob attached to bottom of T. • The most plentiful variety, probably at least twice as populous as the next contender. [Low-120; Rulau HT-268]

6-RER: R-5 ••• Notes: Perfect dies. [Low-128; Rulau HT-309]

7-J: R-8, believed unique ••• Unknown to Russ Rulau. "HT-268-A." Silver, *plain edge.* Perfect dies. [Low unlisted; Rulau HT-268-A]

Undated Feuchtwanger Token Varieties (Circa 1837)

There are two known varieties of undated store cards, each about 27 mm diameter. The first bears the 377 Broadway address and would have been issued prior to spring 1837, and the other bears the 2 Cortlandt Street address first used in spring 1837.

Both of these tokens are similar in concept and both seem to be the products of Bale & Smith, the partnership of James Bale and Frederick Smith, which circa 1834 succeeded the firm of Wright & Bale at 16 Maiden Lane, New York City. The lettering and other aspects are different from the 1837-dated Feuchtwanger cents and three-cent pieces (which do not seem to have been made by Bale & Smith), Certain punches and devices used on Feuchtwanger tokens were also used by Wright & Bale earlier.

From about 1835 to 1838 Bale & Smith had offices at 68 Nassau Street, this being the time the Feuchtwanger tokens were made. Later, the firm relocated to 96 Fulton Street, and still later evolved into Smith & Hartmann, prominent makers of tokens and medalets during the great fad for such pieces circa 1859-1860.

Obverse 100: Dr. L. FEUCHTWANGER / AMERICAN / SILVER / COMPOSITION / 377 / BROAD-WAY / NEW-YORK. in as many lines. Beaded border set slightly inside of the rim. ••• Notes: Hyphen in NEW-YORK is a thin line.

Obverse 101: FEUCHTWANGER / AMERICAN / SILVER / COMPOSITION / 2 / CORTLANDT St. / NEW-YORK. in as many lines. Beaded border set slightly inside of the rim. ••• Notes: U (FEUCHTWANGER) double punched at top of left upright. AM (AMERICAN) and CAN touch at bottom of letters. VE (SILVER) touch at top. RT (CORTLANDT) barely touch at top; several other letter pairs are very close; N slightly high. T (St.) small with dot below it. Hyphen in NEW-YORK is a rectangle; E strengthened at bottom. Most border beads on left connected by raised scribe lines; two beads at lower right, past R (FEUCHTWANGER) are too small.

Reverse AA: HOUSE & HOUSEHOLD, FURNITURE around border, enclosing INSTRUMENTS / [four-leaved rosette] / BEER PUMPS, / PILLARS, GRATES / SPOONS, FORKS / [four-leaved rosette] & DINNER SETS. Beaded border set slightly inside of the rim. ••• Notes: Extraneous comma after HOUSEHOLD. I (FURNITURE) over erroneous A; bases of RE virtually touch; certain other letters are closely spaced. Rosettes with four petals, larger rounded at ends, with raised dot surrounded by lower area at center. ME (INSTRUMENTS) virtually touch; NT touch; certain other letters closely spaced. Letters in PILLARS close; AR touch and are slightly high. RA (GRATES) touch; other letters close or nearly touch. NER (DINNER) touch. SE (SETS) touch; second S touches base of K (FORKS). All border beads linked by raised scribe line or are so closely spaced as to touch.

Die Combinations of Undated Feuchtwanger Advertising Tokens

100-AA: R-7 ••• Notes: Perfect dies. Dies made and tokens struck by Bale & Smith, New York. [Low unlisted; Rulau HT-260]

101-AA: R-6 ••• Notes: Perfect dies. Dies made and tokens struck by Bale & Smith, New York. [Low unlisted; Rulau HT-261]

Feuchtwanger Three Cents, 1837 and 1864

Tokens of this denomination are believed to have been made from planchets cut by Feuchtwanger, who may have struck them as well. They bear no relation to the undated Bale & Smith advertising tokens discussed earlier.

The three-cent denomination was convenient at the time, and certain other notes and tokens produced elsewhere (*e.g.*, the Atwood's Railroad Hotel token by Bale & Smith) stated this value. Two three-cent pieces equaled six cents, exchangeable readily enough for the

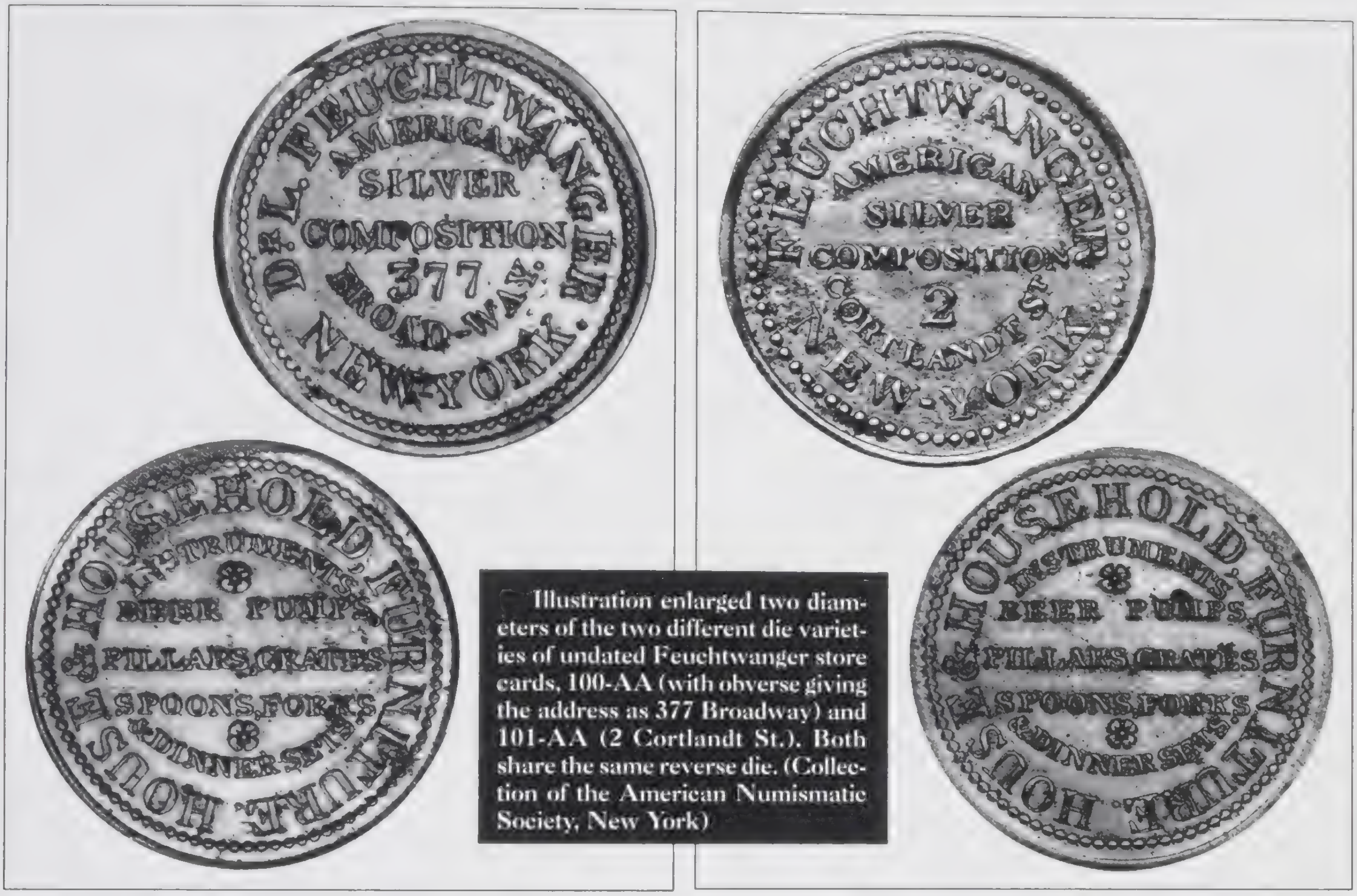
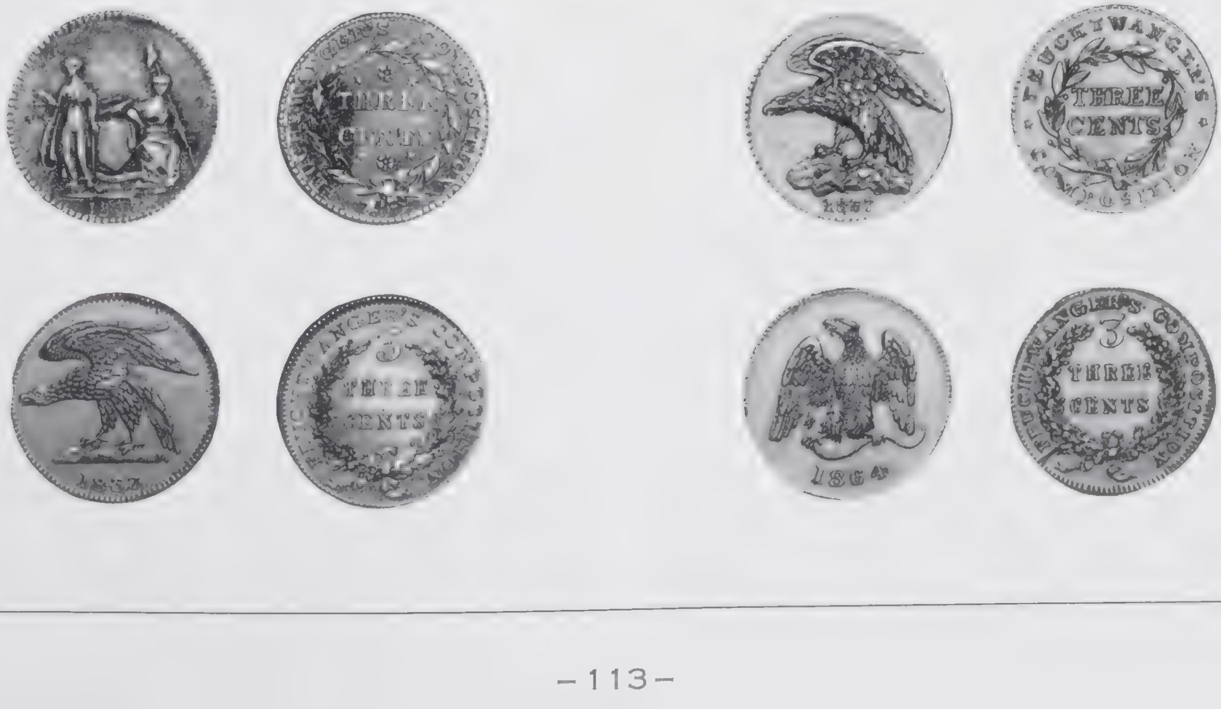

DR. L. FEUCHTWANGER
AMERICAN
SILVER
COMPOSITION
377
BROAD-WAY
NEW-YORK.
FEUCHTWANGER
AMERICAN
SILVER
COMPOSITION
2
CORTLANDT ST
NEW-YORK
HOUSEHOLD, FURNITURE.
INSTRUMENTS
BEER PUMPS
PILLARS, GRATES
SPOONS, FORKS
& DINNER SETS

Illustration enlarged two diameters of the two different die varieties of undated Feuchtwanger store cards, 100-AA (with obverse giving the address as 377 Broadway) and 101-AA (2 Cortlandt St.). Both share the same reverse die. (Collection of the American Numismatic Society, New York)

Illustrations of the four different die varieties of Feuchtwanger three-cent pieces: 111-BB (New York Arms), 112-CC (1837 eagle), 113-DD (1837 eagle), and 114-EE (1864). (Collection of the American Numismatic Society, New York)


FEUCHTWANGER'S
THREE
CENTS
COMPOSITION
1837
3
1864

Spanish-American silver half-bits or medios in common circulation and valued at $6^{1}/_{4}$ cents each.

Obverse 111: State of New York Arms with two figures flanking blank center shield, EXCELSIO [incomplete; the engraver ran out of space] on ribbon below shield. Date 1837 below. ••• Notes: Die rather amateurishly cut, upon close inspection. Left-side figure is of Justice standing, holding balance scales and a sword; the balance scales are supported slightly to the left of center! On top of the shield is a perched eagle facing right. To the right is a seated figure with a scythe and a pole with liberty cap, with bales of merchandise in the background. Date numerals widely spaced; 3 slightly double punched.[1]

Obverse 112: Eagle perched on rocks or ledge, facing right. Date 1837 below. ••• Notes: Date in small numerals, closely spaced. Eagle with feather tips separated.

Obverse 113: Eagle perched on rocks or ledge, facing right. Date 1837 below. ••• Notes: Date in larger numerals, widely spaced. Eagle with longer neck than on preceding. Tail with feather tips tightly spaced and more or less in a line. Bottom of rock nearly in a straight line. Uniface striking in copper known (cf. Russell Rulau, listed as Rulau-266).

Obverse 114: Eagle facing forward, wings outstretched with ends downward, grasping a long snake in its talons. Date 1864 below. ••• Notes: Date numerals widely spaced; crosslet 4.

Reverse BB: FEUCHTWANGER'S COMPOSITION around border. Within, endless wreath tied with heavy ribbon, enclosing: [six-leaved rosette flanked with a five-pointed star to each side] / THREE / CENTS / [rosette flanked with a five-pointed star to each side]. ••• Notes: T (FEUCHTWANGER'S) double punched at base. Wreath with five berries outside and five inside. Rosettes with six blades or petals, larger and flat at ends, with raised dot surrounded by lower area at center.

Reverse CC: FEUCHTWANGER'S / COMPOSITION around border, five-pointed star at each side. Within, endless wreath tied with smaller and somewhat loose ribbon, enclosing: THREE / CENTS.

Reverse DD: FEUCHTWANGER'S COMPOSITION around border. Within, thick open wreath of oak leaves, tied with ribbon below, 3 at apex. Within: THREE / CENTS. ••• Notes: Style unlike that of earlier issues. Wreath with long ribbon ends. Denomination given twice: 3 and THREE.

Die Combinations of Feuchtwanger Three-Cent Tokens

111-BB: R-3 • 1837 date ••• Notes: Perfect dies. Stuck circa 1837. [Low-117; Rulau HT-262]

112-CC: R-5 • 1837 date ••• Notes: Perfect dies. Stuck circa 1837. [Low-118; Rulau HT-263]

113-DD: R-7 • 1837 date ••• Notes: Perfect dies. Time of striking not known, but probably made under the auspices of Dr. Feuchtwanger. Usually seen in high grades, even prooflike. [Low-119; Rulau HT-265]

114-DD: R-6 • 1864 date ••• Notes: Usually seen in high grades. Struck by Feuchtwanger circa 1864-5. Eagerly collected as part of the Civil War token series. [Low mentioned but not numbered; Rulau HT-267]

Feuchtwanger's *Treatise on Gems* Published

In 1838 Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger's 178-page (plus introductory material) book, *A Treatise on Gems, in Reference to Their Practical and Scientific Value; A Useful Guide for the Jeweler, Lapidary, Artist, Amateur, Mineralogist, and Chemist; Accompanied by a Description of the Most Interesting American Gems, and Ornamental and Architectural Materials,* was first published, destined to go into further editions in 1859, 1867, and 1872.[2] This volume was highly acclaimed and became the standard source on its title subject. This was also his last year at 2 Courtlandt Street, where he was listed as "chemist and manufacturer of American silver composition." At the time he resided at 11 North Moore Street.[3]

In 1839 he was listed in the same trade, a "chemist and manufacturer of American silver composition," but now at 7 Gold Street, with his home at 21 White Street (where he resided for the next few years).[4] His second book, *Elements of Mineralogy,* was published, but it never achieved the wide appeal earned by his *Treatise on Gems.* In 1840 he was listed as "apothecary and operative chemist," at 320 Broadway, corner of Pearl Street, home at 21 White Street.[5]

In 1842 he was listed as a chemist (apothecary or druggist), variously at 1 or $1^{1}/_{2}$ Wall Street.[6] In 1842 his business was at 2 Wall Street.[7] These addresses may have represented the same location.

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[1] In 1953 in a visit to the Scovill Manufacturing Co., Waterbury, Connecticut, Dr. George J. Fuld saw a *copy* of this token in lead. However, elsewhere at least one *authentic* lead example exists (Fuld, note to author, 2001).

[2] The first version of the first 1838 printing of this book has the author's name misspelled as "Feuchtwangrr" on the copyright page.

[3] *Longworth's American Almanac, New-York Register, and City Directory,* New York, Thomas Longworth, 1838, p. 244. "Northmoore" in certain listings.

[4] *Longworth's American Almanac, New-York Register, and City Directory,* New York, Thomas Longworth, 1839, p. 251. His home on White Street was not far from his old business location at 377 Broadway.

[5] *Longworth's American Almanac, New-York Register, and City Directory,* New York, Thomas Longworth, 1840, p. 243; *Ibid.,* 1841, p. 269.

[6] *Longworth's American Almanac, New-York Register, and City Directory,* New York, Thomas Longworth, 1842, p. 236 ($1^{1}/_{2}$ Wall Street). • *The New York Business Directory, for 1842 and 1843,* John Doggett, Jr., New York City, 1842, p. 116 (1 Wall Street).

[7] *The New York Business and Co-Partnership Directory, for 1843 and 1844, in Two Parts,* John Doggett, Jr., New York City, 1843, p. 121.

From Bed Bug Poison to Platinum

The July 6, 1844, issue of *Newark Daily Advertiser,* carried this advertisement:[1]

> Bed Bug Poison"—An infallible Remedy—prepared by Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger. Price $37^1/_2$ cents per bottle. For sale at WILLIAMS' Drug store, No. 243 Broad at 3 doors above Commerce St.

A notice in the *New York Herald,* October 21, 1844, reflected other goods sold by Feuchtwanger in the same year:

> FIFTY OUNCES PLATINA
>
> In plate and wire of best quality, just received from France, which is offered for sale by Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger, No. 60 Maiden Lane.
>
> N.B. Kreosote, Metallic Bismuth, Hyposulphide Soda, Rose, Pin, Purple Lake, Red Lake, in pulp and dry, Euen's Plasters, Copaiva Capsules. Diamond Cement, fine Jeweler's Rouge, Veratrin, Wood Naphtha, Nitrate of Barytes and Strontia, Oxalate of Potash, Muriatic of Tin, &c., &c., &c., constantly on hand by Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger, No. 60 Maiden Lane.

In the mid-1840s Feuchtwanger was listed as a manufacturing chemist at 23 Liberty Street, near William Street, in a district in which many importing and light manufacturing enterprises were located.[2] His residence remained at 21 White Street.

About this time: "After the great fire of 1846 [*sic;* should be 1845] he called the attention of the authorities of New York to the fact that saltpetre would explode under certain conditions. This statement created much discussion; the expression, 'Will saltpetre explode?' became a byword, and a play was acted at one of the theatres in which a character representing Dr. Feuchtwanger was presented."[3]

The great fire was described by this eyewitness account:[4]

> In 1845 New York was again visited by a conflagration second only in its ravages to the one of 1835. The burnt district embraced Broadway, Exchange Place, New, Broad, Beaver, Marketfield, Stone, and Whitehall streets....
>
> It broke out on July 19th, 1845, completely destroying Exchange Place and Beaver Street, from Broadway almost to William. Both sides of Broad Street, from above Exchange Place to Stone, with the east sides of Broadway and Whitehall, were consumed. Above Exchange Place the flames crossed Broadway and consumed a number of buildings on its west side.
>
> During the progress of the fire a tremendous explosion took place, similar to that of 1835, in a building stored with saltpeter. The owner contended that the article could not explode, which gave rise to the long-debated question, "Will saltpeter explode?" and for a long time able and scientific men warmly took sides in the arguments. Explosive or not, this was the second store filled with the article that blew up, causing great alarm and destruction in the neighborhood.
>
> Three hundred and forty-five buildings were swept away at this time. Their value, with the goods, was estimated at about five millions of dollars.

Travels

In the meantime, Feuchtwanger was busy on many other fronts. For *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine and Commercial Review* he wrote several long essays. In 1847 one such report noted, in part:

> It is mentioned as a well-known fact, by all writers on the geology of the United States, that true "chalk has never been discovered in this country;" yet the chalk formation, or the cretaceous system, extends, in nearly a straight line, from New Jersey to Florida; because a great many fossil marine shells, which are found in the chalk of France and England, have been identified in the calcareous and sandstone rocks of New Jer-

---

[1] Copy furnished by Charles McSorley.

[2] At the same address were other businesses, including: Johnson, Moore & Taylor, importers of French and English drugs, chemicals, essential oils, brushes, perfumery, stationery, &c., operated by Oscar Johnson, James Moore, and H.E. Taylor, upstairs in the building; and Leedom, Widdifield & Cohu, wholesale dealers in foreign and domestic hardware, operated by B.J. Leedom, C. Widdifield, and H.S. Cohu (advertisers in *Sheldon & Co.'s Business or Advertising Directory;* John F. Trow & Co., New York, 1845). • *Doggett's New-York City Directory for 1845 & 1846,* New York: John Doggett, Jr. • *Doggett's New-York City Directory for 1846 and 1847,* New York: John Doggett, Jr. • Years later, on February 18, 1858, the three-story building at 23 Liberty Street was totally destroyed by fire. "Mr. Edward Hen, of 23 Liberty Street, importer of fancy German goods, will lose the most part of his stock; loss estimated at $10,000—covered by insurance" (cf. *The New York Herald,* February 18, 1858).

[3] *Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography,* p. 444, there spelled as indicated, saltpetre. • Saltpeter is a naturally occurring form of potassium nitrate, KNO_3, that found utility in the making of fireworks, gunpowder, etc., and was and is generally regarded as hazardous to handle and store.

[4] By Gabriel P. Disosway, as quoted by William L. Stone, *History of New York City* (New York: Virtue & Yorston, 1872), pp. 509-510, this being an essay Disosway prepared for the work. • Another eyewitness account, by George Templeton Strong (from his diary in the archives of Columbia University), is reproduced by Kenneth Holcomb Dunshee, *As You Pass By,* Hastings House, New York, 1952, pp. 75-79. • I.N. Phelps Stokes, *The Iconography of Manhattan Island,* 1498-1909, Vol. V, p. 1792: "The fire began in the sperm oil establishment of J.L. Van Doren, 34 New Street, and extended to Exchange Place and Broad St., and finally to the storage house of Crooker & Warren in Broad Street. This was a storage for saltpetre. It blew up, and the explosion shook the city, was felt in Jersey City and Brooklyn, and was heard at Sandy Hook. The Adelphi Hotel on Beaver St., the Waverly House on Broadway, 12 warehouses on both sides of Broad St. between Wall St. and Exchange Place, and from Broadway to William St. were destroyed."

> sey, Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama; because many other animals, which are extinct at the present day, have been dug out in the green sand of both Europe and this country, and because the cretaceous system, which includes the marls, oolite, and beds of clay, and the magnesian limestone, correspond to that general great era of revolution which must have taken place contemporaneously in both hemispheres.
>
> Chalk is said not to have been found *in situ*, but the doubt hitherto expressed on this subject may safely be cleared up; for I brought with me, a few weeks ago, from Georgia, an interesting specimen of real chalk, enclosing flint; a most striking characteristic of the chalk of Lunenburg, Paris, and London.
>
> The specimen I have exhibited to a number of my scientific friends, who all pronounce it in the highest degree interesting. I have treated it chemically, and its effervescing in muriatic acid, its behavior before the blowpipe, convinced me that chalk must be found in larger deposits. I have also a few specimens of Echinus infulatus, from the same locality, and hope, in a short time, to discover a continuous bed of the substance.
>
> Lewis Feuchtwanger.

To the preceding, Freeman Hunt, founder and editor, appended this:

> Dr. Feuchtwanger has shown us a specimen of the real chalk, as described in the foregoing communication, and has no doubt that it is to be found in great abundance in a large region of our country, so that it will not be necessary to go to France or Newcastle for the article.

In the same year Hunt printed "Iron: A Short Sketch of its Production," by Feuchtwanger. The writer noted that in 1810, some 53,908 tons of pig iron were produced,

> while; in 1847, the quantity of pig iron made here exceeds 500,000 tons. The latest improvements, by the hot blast and other contrivances, have increased the product of pig metal 50 per cent, so that we may reasonably expect the product of pig iron to be about 700,000 tons, which, at the average price of $35 per ton of No. 1 pig iron, would be a revenue to the States where it is produced of $17,500,000, the principal part of which goes to the states of Pennsylvania, New York, and Tennessee.
>
> The state of Missouri, with its inexhaustible deposits of superior iron, has yet not produced any pig iron, although the city of St. Louis, containing twelve of the largest foundries in the western country for the construction of machinery, steamboats, &c., has been obligated to import its pig iron from great distances on the Ohio, Tennessee, and Cumberland rivers. The Iron Mountains, which are capable of furnishing 600,000,000 tons, are beginning to supply, in a small measure, the demand; but the freight of transportation from the interior, nearly 50 miles, enhances its expense.[1]
>
> Within a few months, however, a company of some enterprising St. Louis merchants have opened an immense deposit of rich iron ore, contiguous to the Mississippi River, which bids fair to supply the demands for pig iron in St. Louis, and the Missouri and Upper Mississippi valleys. I allude to the St. Louis and Birmingham Iron Co., a distance of two miles from the town of Birmingham, and 120 miles below St. Louis....

While the foregoing excerpts are hardly numismatic, they do reflect upon the mineral resources of America and their development, and illumine the wide interests of Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger.

Sometimes in reading through a lot of historical matter, pieces of a puzzle come together in interesting ways. If you are a really dedicated student of nineteenth-century American numismatic trivia, you might be able to spot a numismatic connection in this item from the December 1848 issue of *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine and Commercial Review:*

> **Anti-Putrid Disinfecting Agent**
>
> Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger, a skillful chemist of New York, has invented a new disinfecting agent for purifying and ventilating ships, hospitals, prisons, sick rooms, sinks, cesspools, &c., which we understand has been tested in most of the hospitals in New York, as well as in the prisons, hotels, and other public places, and "everywhere," we are assured, "with the most decided and unqualified approbation," as may be seen by reference to certificates which Dr. F. has received from Bellevue, Emigrant and Quarantine Hospitals, Coroner, City Prisons, Astor House, and from eminent chemists, as Drs. Chilton, Reese, Geer, Ball, Doane, &c., which have been published in a pamphlet form.

Stumped? Well, I am sure you are not alone, that not one reader in a thousand would make the connection that Dr. Chilton, who endorsed Feuchtwanger's disinfectant, was a numismatist of some renown! In 1859 he was one of nine prominent collectors honored by Augustus B. Sage in his "Numismatic Gallery" medal series, the lineup of which included Charles I. Bushnell, Henry Bogert, Jeremiah Colburn, James R. Chilton, Winslow Lewis, Frank Jaudon, William H. Chesley (two die varieties), Horatio N. Rust, and Robert J. Dodge.

In 1876 Emmanuel J. Attinelli in his *Numisgraphics* book wrote of Chilton, noting that he "was the well-known chemist, whose fame as such is too far spread to make it possible to be added to at this period. As an antiquarian, his collections of books, coins, casts, etc., bespeak his industry, thought, and care."[1] Thus, we might presume that in 1876 he was, indeed, well known.

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[1] The Iron Mountains were in Missouri. Feuchtwanger had visited them in 1846 and penned a long letter on November 17 of that year to Hunt about their potential. Later, a town in Michigan was named Iron Mountain, and in the twentieth century Iron Mountain became a nickname for a given Federal Reserve Bank, because of its steel vaults.

More about Feuchtwanger's Composition

In 1849 *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine and Commercial Review* published this about German silver, which seems to have achieved great success in venues other than coinage and for people other than Feuchtwanger:[2]

> ### Popularity of German Silver
>
> Few of our readers are probably aware how many applications are now-a-days made of this composition. We call it composition, although the majority of the people imagine that it is a metal *sui generis*, but such is not the fact. It is composed of one part of nickel, one part of spelter or zinc, and three parts of copper; but all these substances have to be pure, and be exposed to a great heat before they mix among themselves. The zinc metal, which is of a volatile nature, is put in the pot not until the first two metals are well united together.
>
> The refractory nature of nickel, and the difficulty of obtaining the metal free from arsenic, iron and cobalt, are the causes that not infrequently we see German silver spoons of gold yellow color, while German silver prepared from pure metals will equal in whiteness sterling, silver, and will not tarnish. Tea and table spoons, knives and forks, pocket-combs, musical and surgical instruments, firemen's and ship captains' speaking-trumpets, pocket-books clasps, tea sets, lamps, and gun mountings, are now mostly made with German silver.
>
> Upwards of 50,000 lb. of this composition is manufactured in this country annually, for which the nickel is imported from Germany and England. There are but three locations of nickel ore in this country: an ore from Chatham, in Connecticut, yields about three per cent nickel; another ore from the mine La Motte, in Missouri, yields about 10 per cent nickel; and lately a nickel ore has been discovered among the copper ore on Lake Superior.[3]
>
> ### Feuchtwanger's Importance
>
> German silver was introduced into the United States by Dr. Feuchtwanger, of New York, who was obliged to pay, on his arrival in the country, the custom-house duties of silver, the inspectors not knowing any difference. He is the first manufacturer of the German silver in the United States, and he is justly entitled to the paternity of this useful composition.
>
> He received, in 1834, '35, and '36, silver medals from the American Institute for the crude material, and for his exhibition of over a hundred different useful articles. We regret much that he has not realized that remuneration which his perceptive powers and ingenuity ought to have rewarded him, while other men have realized fortunes, and continued to do so, from the information imparted to them by the knowledge of Dr. Feuchtwanger.
>
> In 1837, the Doctor petitioned Congress to grant him permission of issuing $20,000 worth of pennies made of his composition, as an experiment to substitute the German silver for the copper currency; and Mr. John Quincy Adams in the House, and Mr. Benton of the Senate, spoke in the highest terms of this proposition, and it met with the approbation of the president of the United States, Mr. Van Buren, and the members of both houses.
>
> He failed, nevertheless, in that also, on account of the unfavorable report from the Director of the United States Mint, who stated that the right of coinage belongs to the United States government, and that it required some skill to analyze the German silver.

The 1850s

In 1851 Dr. Feuchtwanger attended the Crystal Palace Exhibition in London and reported his observations to *Hunt's Merchant's Magazine*, the latest in a long string of commentaries submitted to that publication. While in England he sold an impressive exhibit of gems, but later built another. His visit intensified his already strong interest in gems and mineral specimens and prompted him to work on a revision of his 1838 *Treatise on Gems*.

In October 1852 at the 26th Annual Fair of the American Institute, the category of "Drugs and Chemicals" was judged by James R. Chilton, William W. Ellet, Isaiah Deck, and John H. Currie. Among the many citations was this: "L. Feuchtwanger, 141 Maiden Lane, for a cabinet of chemical and other preparations, silver medal."[4]

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[1] Attinelli p. 40. • In an 1837 directory of New York City goods and services he is listed as a "chemist and philosophical [scientific] instrument maker" at 263 Broadway, one of five chemists delineated (another was token-issuer Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger). In 1860 his business address was 93 Prince Street, and he resided at 125 Fifth Avenue, the latter a very desirable location at the time. Among his professional activities, Chilton lent or sold his name in testimonials for various products. At the time, financial emoluments for such endorsements tended to be non-existent or very modest, usually less than $100 and often less than $10. It was a quid pro quo situation, and the endorser basked in the glow of having his name spread across columns of newspapers and magazines.

[2] Subtitles added.

[3] By the mid-1850s the main source for nickel was a mine near Lancaster Gap, Pennsylvania; metal from this mine was furnished to the Mint for the preparation of 1856 Flying Eagle cents. In 1863 this mine was purchased by Joseph Wharton, who forthwith began promoting the metal (the Wharton School of Business, University of Pennsylvania, is named for him).

[4] *Transactions of the American Institute of the City of New York for the Year 1852*, p. 481.

In 1853 the Philadelphia Mint created pattern coins employing a quarter eagle obverse die with a new reverse die inscribed ONE / CENT within a wreath, struck in at least two alloys called German silver, but not specifically Feuchtwanger's Composition: 60% copper, 30% nickel, and 10% zinc; and 40% copper, 40% nickel, and 20% zinc.[1] Additional German silver patterns were made in 1854 and 1855. Meanwhile in Munich, Germany, experiments were conducted with Feuchtwanger's Composition for coinage use.

On July 18, 1856, James C. Booth, melter and refiner on the Mint staff, wrote enthusiastically concerning the advantages of the new copper-nickel alloy, noting, in part:[2]

> 1. It is made of metals which have as definite a value as the usual articles of commerce, and the supply of which is unlimited. They are copper and nickel.[3]
>
> 2. It is sufficiently soft metal to receive a bold impression in coinage.
>
> 3. It was [*sic*] a distinctive color, and cannot be confounded with the metals or alloys used or proposed for coinage.
>
> 4. It will abrade by wear less than copper, gold, or silver, or even than the proposed bronze alloy.[4]
>
> 5. It will change color, by darkening to a slight extent, but less than the bronzed [*sic*] cent, and much less than copper. It will alter less than the ordinary silver coin used on the continent of Europe.
>
> 6. It is made up of copper and nickel in such proportions that a cent piece may be made of about 70 grains weight, and yet the seignorage on their manufacture and issue will not be exorbitant, much less, in fact, than the bronze cent proposed. The seignorage will be ample to recall the old Spanish coin from circulation.[5]
>
> 7. The peculiar tone of color will render it difficult of close imitation....

In 1856 and early 1857 the Mint produced many hundreds of pattern 1856-dated Flying Eagle cents employing nickel in the aforementioned alloy, copper-nickel, with the respective components being 88% of the former and 12% of the latter. Copper-nickel cents for circulation were made in large quantities in 1857 and released on May 25 of that year.[6]

Returning to Dr. Feuchtwanger, in 1858 his book, *Fermented Liquors: A Treatise on Brewing, Distilling, Rectifying, and Manufacturing of Sugars, Wines, Spirits, and All Known Liquors, Including Cider and Vinegar. Also, Hundreds of Valuable Directions in Medicine, Metallurgy, Pyrotechny, and The Arts in General,* was published, once again displaying the multiplicity of his interests and areas of expertise.[7]

An 1857 Flying Eagle cent of the type struck at the Philadelphia Mint and first released into circulation on May 25, 1857.

In 1859 the expanded, revised second edition of *A Popular Treatise on Gems* was published in New York City by D. Appleton & Company, illustrated with hand-colored plates. Dr. James R. Chilton, the famous New York chemist who was later a well-known numismatist, loaned certain of his specimens for study. This edition had 437 numbered pages and 18 lithograph plates, more than half in color.

The Three-Cent Pieces of 1864

The New York Herald, June 22, 1860, included this notice:

> USEFUL PREPARATIONS—FLY PAPER, Insect Powder, Liquid and Dry Soluble Glass for soap manufacturers and protecting wood and ladies' dresses against fire; extracts Cognac, Gin, Rum, and Bourbon Whiskey, Spirit Emollient, Nitrates, Strontia and Baryta, Fluorspar, Manganese, Black Lead, Asbestos, Platina, Aluminum, and Cadmium. FEUCHTWANGER & SON, 42 Cedar Street.

In 1861 the partnership of Lewis Feuchtwanger & Son, druggists, continued business at 42 Cedar Street. Lewis resided at 18 West 35th Street. Joseph W. Feuchtwanger, druggist, had the same business and home address.

In the meantime, the copper-nickel alloy introduced to make federal cents in quantity beginning with the 1857 Flying Eagle, with the design changed to the Indian head in 1859, was causing many problems. The metal was much harder than the copper used earlier, and die wear and breakage became a great annoyance. In 1863, after some experiments, the Mint decided to discontinue the use of nickel in coinage, and adopted bronze as the cent alloy.

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[1] Such patterns are variously described in the literature, including as Pollock-178 in *United States Pattern and Related Pieces*, Andrew W. Pollock III, 1994, p. 63.

[2] Ex. Doc. No. 128, 34th Congress, 1st Session, House of Representatives.

[3] A meaningless comment, as all metals had more or less standard values. Contrary to Booth's statement, nickel was quite scarce at the time, with few domestic sources.

[4] A reference to bronze alloy patterns being made during this era (of the Liberty Head and Flying Eagle designs).

[5] Another reference to the bronze cent; patterns were struck in various alloys of copper in 1854 and 1855. The reference to Spanish silver coins relates to worn, underweight Spanish coins, then legal tender in the U.S., being exchanged for the new cents; there was enough seignorage or profit in the cent to overcome shortages in silver coin weight.

[6] Adventure No. 35 describes the 1856 Flying Eagle cent.

[7] Thanks to Wayne S. Homren for certain information supplied, April 2001.

On April 15, 1864, Joseph Wharton, who in 1863 had purchased a nickel mine in Lancaster Gap, Pennsylvania, and who reportedly had $200,000 invested in it, published a pamphlet, "Project for Reorganizing the Small Coinage of the United States of America," which recommended that the use of nickel be *increased*, and denominations of 1¢, 2¢, 3¢, 5¢, and 10¢ be made with an alloy of 25% nickel and 75% copper.

This activity seems to have attracted the attention of Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger, who had dies made for use in a new coinage proposal for the government. In 1864 a new version of the Feuchtwanger three-cent token was produced. The obverse depicted a spread eagle, head facing to the viewer's left, grasping a rattlesnake in its claws, with the date 1864 below. The reverse inscription included FEUCHTWANGER'S COMPOSITION, the numeral 5, and also THREE / CENTS.

These do not seem to have been made in large numbers, nor were they placed into circulation. Their purpose could have been as a pattern to solicit a government contract, probably in connection with the following. Not long thereafter, on March 28, 1865, Feuchtwanger wrote to Mint Director James Pollock:[1]

> Having made for the week past a number of experiments on the three cent planchets for the purpose of giving you the exact value at which I can furnish you 50,000 lbs., I came to the conclusion that at the present price of materials, and extreme hardness of the composition and rolling down No. 21 in order to make the planchets weigh 30 grains each I cannot afford to furnish them for less than Two Dollars ($2.00) per pound and at that price am ready to deliver at once on receiving exact pattern from you for size, thickness, etc. in quantities sufficient to send you a weekly supply.
>
> My capacity is to cast and roll two tons a day and to cut with a punch press 120 lb. or 3,000 pieces for each press. My first proposition seems to have been misunderstood by the Department, as I meant when I set the 1st of July to have the whole amount furnished by that date and in quantities as wanted not to keep you delayed until that time, as I am prepared to commence immediately.
>
> I shall endeavor to meet with your approbation if you will conclude to give me a chance. Awaiting your kind orders, I am,
>
> Lewis Feuchtwanger.

Pollock replied on March 30:

> Sir:
>
> Yours of the 28th inst. enclosing bid for the manufacture of the new 3c planchet is received.
>
> Other parties having bid much lower than yourself your proposal cannot be accepted.
>
> Jas. Pollock, Director.

Feuchtwanger was no match with Joseph Wharton, who exerted strong influence on Mint officials and on certain members of Congress, and at his doorstep can be directly laid the widespread use of nickel in coinage during this era including the new nickel three-cent piece in 1865 and the nickel five-cent piece in 1866 which were made in accordance with his 25% nickel, 75% copper suggestion.[2] Through his connections—whatever they were—he snatched victory from the jaws of defeat, and soon the Mint was again striking coins with nickel content, using much of his metal.

From a numismatic standpoint, Feuchtwanger's letter to Pollock is significant as it indicates that he had on hand the equipment to roll out strip from ingots and several punch presses to make planchets. It is likely that these were on hand from the era of 1837, this being the height of his activity in this specialty.

Regarding the three-cent pieces made by Feuchtwanger, the same reverse used on the 1864-dated coin is known combined with a "new" 1837-dated reverse, not known to have circulated in 1837. Perhaps these, too, were produced circa 1864-5 to illustrate the three-cent concept, the 1837 date being a link with the past (of course, this is speculation).

Later Years

In 1866 a special study by Feuchtwanger was published in New York by D. Murphy's Son, under the title of *Report on Frye's Island, also called L'Etang Island, N.W. shore of the Bay of Fundy, N.B.: Its mineral*

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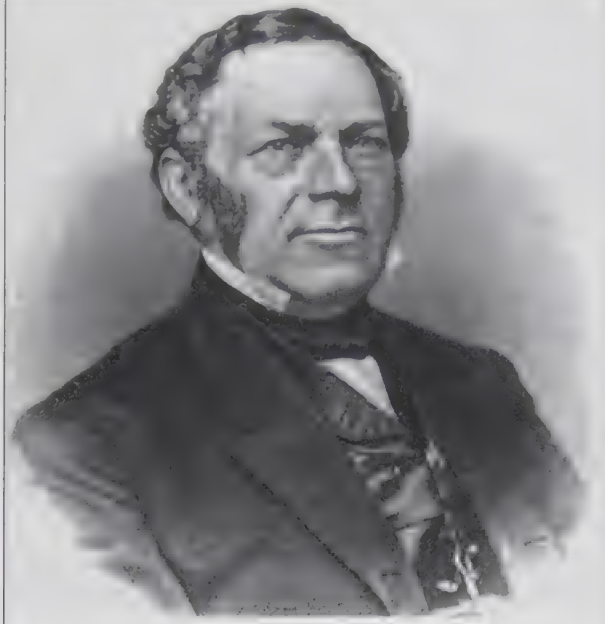
[1] *Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine*, February 1963, p. 318.

[2] The Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania is named for him, following his funding in 1881. Wharton (March 3, 1826 - January 11, 1909), well-known in his time for his unflagging efforts to influence legislators, has been largely lionized in print over the years, except in obscure financial and political analyses (Carothers' book being an example). Wharton set up exhibits promoting nickel at international fairs in Vienna in 1873 and Philadelphia in 1876, among other places. He sought to influence various countries—Russia in particular, but his petition was unsuccessful—to substitute nickel alloy for silver in coinage, stating that great profits could be made this way. In an earlier generation—in the mid-1830s—Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger was a strong advocate of nickel in coinage, and in 1837 he caused many one-cent pieces to be privately made in a silver-appearing alloy containing a significant percentage of nickel.



Dr. Feuchtwanger as pictured on the frontispiece of the 3rd edition of *Treatise on Gems*, 1867.

resources, as seen on a cursory examination, accompanied by the report of Professor Baily, to the lieutenant governor of New Brunswick; Capt. Key, mining engineer and superintendent; the state geologist of the province of New Brunswick, Prof. Hind, and made to the provincial secretary, and the statement of Henry Frye, Esq., the proprietor of the island. Apparently, the distribution was very limited.[1] During this era Dr. Feuchtwanger traveled widely and furnished many reports on geological and mineralogy.

In 1867 the expanded (by adding appendices) third edition of *A Popular Treatise on Gems* published in New York City by the author, then at 55 Cedar Street. The volume comprised 528 pages and 18 lithograph plates, more than half in color. Feuchtwanger's portrait served as the frontispiece.

In 1870 his book, *Dr. Feuchtwanger's Practical Treatise on Soluble or Water Glass. Its Application to Artificial Stone and to Render Wood Fire and Rot Proof; Containing the Latest Information for Its Use in Paint, Soap, Paper, Cements and Calico Printing* was published. The volume also had an additional treatise, "On the Functions of Carbonic Acid and Origin of Limestone." In 1873 a revised edition appeared, this time with two additional treatises beyond the one on soluble glass, these being on glass making and on soap making. In 1875 Feuchtwanger's final edition appeared without extra treatises, as "the price of the former editions was, by many applicants, considered too expensive, while the present edition can be supplied at a moderate price."[2]

In 1872 the 4th and final edition of his standard text, *A Popular Treatise on Gems in Reference to Their Scientific Value*, was published, with few changes from the 3rd edition.

The Passing of Dr. Feuchtwanger

Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger died in New York City on June 25, 1876, and left a legacy of kind remembrances to his friends. He was survived by his widow and two daughters.

At a later date Feuchtwanger's daughters gave his personal collection of mineral specimens to the Society of Ethical Culture, at Central Park West and 63rd Street, New York City. Richard A. Canfield, a well-known collector of minerals, coins, and other objects, wrote:[3]

> [Feuchtwanger's] daughters presented his collection to the Society of Ethical Culture about 1900. It was a general collection. Many years ago, while his collection was exhibited in the Old Arsenal in Central Park, some of the specimens were stolen.[4]

Another account, this by New York mineral dealer Charles W.A. Hermann in a letter to Clarence S. Bement, noted that after Feuchtwanger died and while his daughters were on a trip to Paris, "his mineral collection was stolen."[5] It seems that at best Feuchtwanger's legacy of mineral specimens was casually cared for.

Feuchtwanger's Tokens and Numismatics

Over the years the tokens of Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger have attracted the attention of many numismatists. Cited below are notices and auction appearances, ranging from the 1850s through the early twentieth century, reflecting the status of such pieces over the years, a small selection from many hundreds of listings that could be given.

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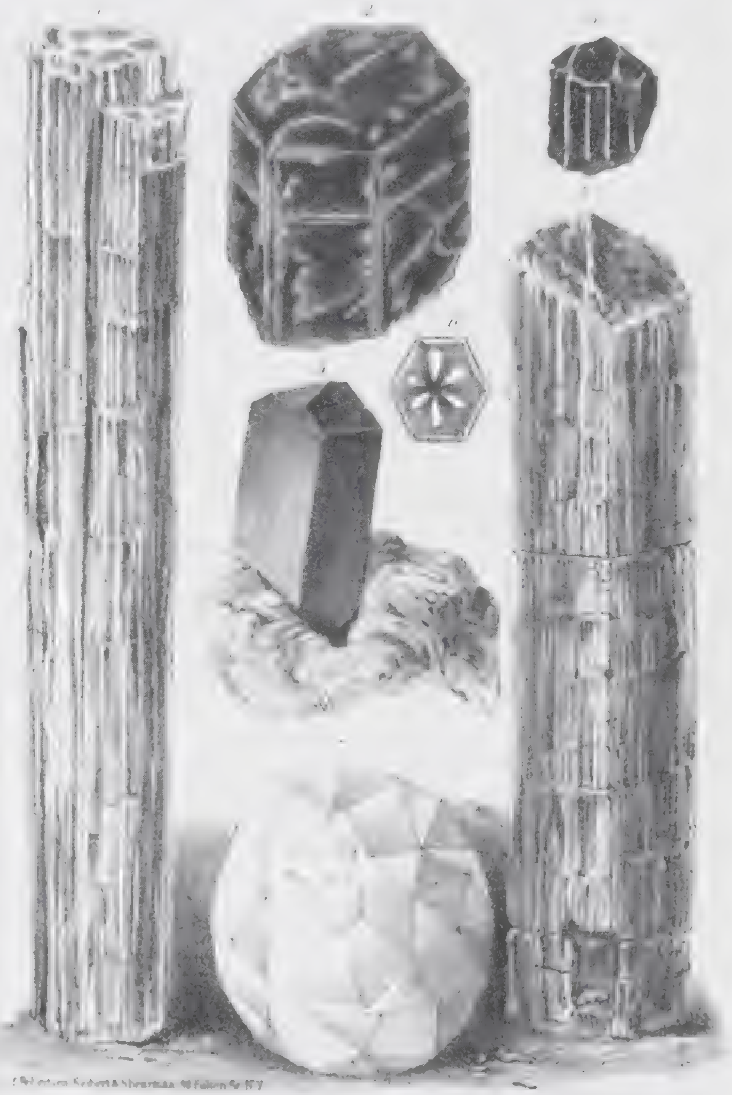
[1] A copy is held by the National Library of Canada, Ottawa.

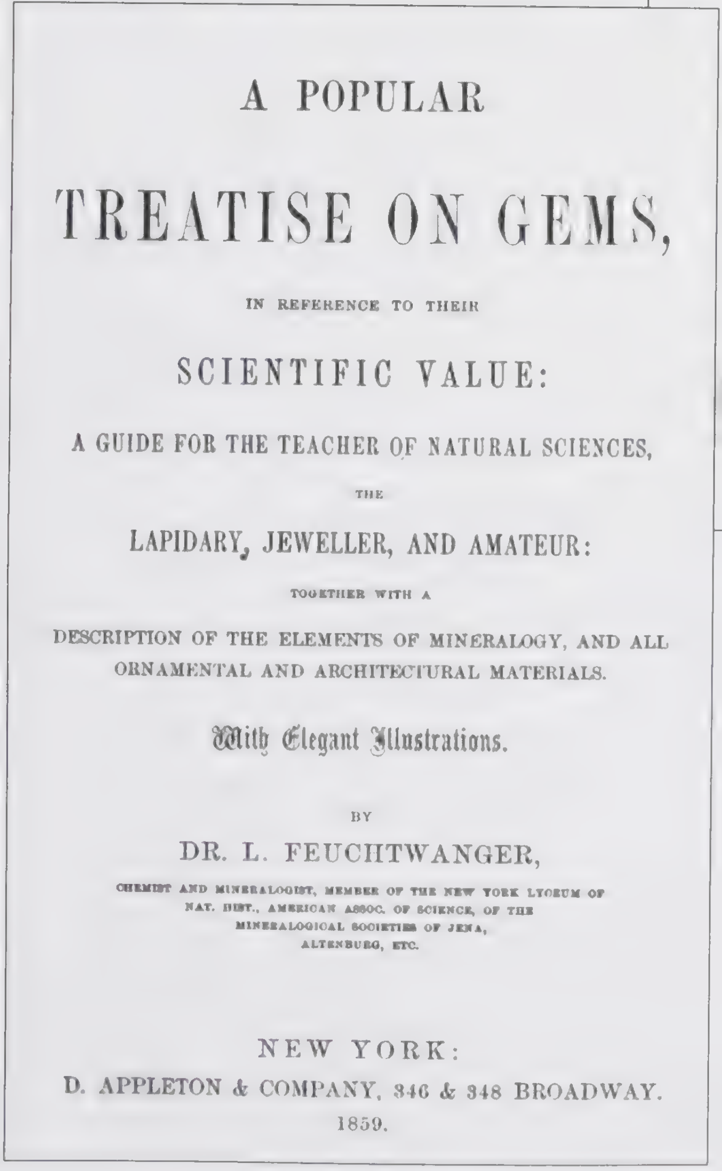
[2] Printed on paper with high sulfur content, surviving copies of the 3rd edition are fragile.

[3] In *Final Disposition*, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 41-46, as cited by Lawrence H. Conklin an article, "Charles W.A. Herrmann (1801-1898), Mineralogist and Mineral Dealer," *The Mineralogical Record*, Vol. 25, May-June 1994. Further, "In 1891 Hermann sent to Clarence S. Bement [another collector who achieved prominence in both coins and minerals] a copy of a book written by Lewis Feuchtwanger, which the author had presented to him.... He told Bement that 'Dr. Feuchtwanger came every Sunday afternoon to me even when ice was on the street, talking minerals.'" Biographer Conklin related that Hermann came to America from Germany in 1853, after which time he made the acquaintance of Feuchtwanger.

[4] This was the first and temporary home of the Museum of Natural History and was utilized 1870-1879 when the main buildings for the Museum were being constructed at Central Park West.

[5] Cf. Lawrence H. Conklin, "Charles W.A. Herrmann (1801-1898), Mineralogist and Mineral Dealer," *The Mineralogical Record*, Vol. 25, May-June 1994.





A POPULAR

TREATISE ON GEMS,

IN REFERENCE TO THEIR

SCIENTIFIC VALUE:

A GUIDE FOR THE TEACHER OF NATURAL SCIENCES,

THE

LAPIDARY, JEWELLER, AND AMATEUR:

TOGETHER WITH A

DESCRIPTION OF THE ELEMENTS OF MINERALOGY, AND ALL
ORNAMENTAL AND ARCHITECTURAL MATERIALS.

With Elegant Illustrations.

BY

DR. L. FEUCHTWANGER,

CHEMIST AND MINERALOGIST, MEMBER OF THE NEW YORK LYCEUM OF
NAT. HIST., AMERICAN ASSOC. OF SCIENCE, OF THE
MINERALOGICAL SOCIETIES OF JENA,
ALTENBURG, ETC.

NEW YORK:
D. APPLETON & COMPANY, 346 & 348 BROADWAY.
1859.

Frontispiece and title page (reduced) from Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger's 2nd edition, 1859, of *Treatise on Gems,* extensively revised from the 1838 version and now with engravings finished by "Mr. Schnapauff, who colored the plates with great care and precision."

The title page noted that Feuchtwanger was a "chemist and mineralogist, member of the New York Lyceum of Nat. Hist., American Assoc. of Science, of the mineralogical societies of Jena, Altenburg, etc."

In the introduction a credit line was given to "Dr. James R. Chilton for the use of his beautiful zircon and American marbles." Further: "The marble from California, that from the quarry lately discovered in Pennsylvania, the Leocadia Breccia, the Verde-Antique of Vermont, and the white marble from Canaan, Conn., which is used in the construction of the Fifth Avenue Hotel, Madison Square, N.Y., are referred to as illustrations." In the same year, 1859, Augustus B. Sage would honor Chilton as one of nine subjects in his "Numismatic Gallery" series of medals.

Augustus B. Sage writing in the *New-York Dispatch*, August 16, 1857, discussed the following, a very early *numismatic* reference:

> *Feuchtwanger Cent.* In 1837 Dr. Feuchtwanger, of this city, submitted a cent; to Congress for their examination, wishing them to adopt it for general circulation. It was refused. It was composed of lead and tin, I believe. On the obverse there is an eagle standing in a very hostile position upon a snake, and underneath the date 1837. On the reverse there is "one cent" on the field surrounded by a wreath, and around the coin, 'Feuchtwanger's Composition.'
>
> The edge is nicely grained. Take it all in all, it is a very fair sample of work, and if Congress can accept such a piece of work as the 'new cent,'[1] why didn't they accept that? It was exactly the *size of the present issue*, and has a white color.

At the time, Sage, writing under the pseudonym "Gus," was occasionally challenged by reader of the *Dispatch*, styling himself "Numismatist," this being none other than Charles I. Bushnell, quite possibly the foremost collector of tokens and store cards at the time. Sage and Bushnell became warm friends, possibly at the time of their exchanges in 1857, or in 1858 (see citation below), and Bushnell commissioned a special medal to be struck as a token of his esteem.[2]

Years later, Sage would recall:[3]

> About the year 1858 I first met Mr. Charles Bushnell, a gentleman who has probably done as much as any other in the country to advance the interest of numismatology. Mr. Bushnell then had his office at No. 63 Wall Street, engaged in the practice of his profession, as a lawyer, and was then, and is still engaged, I believe, on a work which ever completed, published I should say, will rank as the only authentic history of American coinage ever published in this country.[4]
>
> During my time there have been numerous efforts by 'historians of an hour's growth' to send their name (and the printer's) to posterity, on the title page of an American numismatic work. [Such have been of little value.] Mr. Bushnell has published a work on American tokens, the letter press consisting mostly of descriptions of such tokens as came within his observation prior to its publication. What with the thousands of "store cards" and copperheads [Civil War tokens] that have been uttered since, I fancy such a work would now prove rather voluminous.

The "work on American tokens" was published by Bushnell under date of June 3, 1858, and bore the title, *An Arrangement of Tradesmen's Cards, Political Tokens, also, Election Medals, Medalets, &c. Current in the United States of America for the Last Sixty Years, Described from the Originals, Chiefly in the Collection of the Author.*

"This work has been ready for the press for more than two years, but the continued ill health of the author has prevented its previous publication," an introductory comment noted. While the listing of several hundred tokens, including 116 classified under "New York," did not compare to the listings later generated by such students as Lyman H. Low, Dr. Benjamin Wright, Edgar H. Adams, Donald M. Miller, or Russell Rulau—to mention just a few—it was very well done and stands today as the first book ever published specifically about American tokens.

In the "New York" classification, Bushnell presented these:

> 99.
>
> Ob: Arms of the State of New-York.[5] Below, the date "1837."
>
> Rev: "*Feuchtwanger's Composition,*" outside of a wreath. Within the wreath, "*Three Cents.*"
>
> Edge, milled. Metal, German silver. Size, 6½.[6]
>
> 100.
>
> Ob: An Eagle, with expanded wings, facing to the left, standing upon a ledge of rocks. Below, the date "1837."
>
> Rev: Same as last.
>
> Edge, milled. Metal, German silver. Size, 6½.
>
> Very few were struck of this variety.

---

[1] Reference to the new 1857 Flying Eagle cent, which Sage seems to have disliked.

[2] Full text of the Sage articles in the *New-York Dispatch*, additional information about Bushnell, etc., will be found in *American Numismatics Before the Civil War, 1760-1860.*

[3] Letter from Sage published in the *American Journal of Numismatics*, March 1867, penned February 23, 1867.

[4] This book was never published, but much valuable information gathered by Bushnell concerning colonial and early American coins was used by Sylvester S. Crosby in the early 1870s during the preparation of the latter's *Early Coins of America.* The reference to "authenticity" and the subsequent reference to "historians of an hour's growth," may allude to Dr. Montroville W. Dickeson's 1859 work, *American Numismatical Manual*, which was roundly criticized for its errors.

[5] It was fashionable at the time, and long before, to hyphenate the city as New-York; today the New-York Historical Society preserves this old usage in its name.

[6] From a size or measuring scale devised by Théodore Edme Mionnet and published in Paris in 1806 in the first volume of *Description de Médailles Antiques*, a series continued through the 16th volume in 1837. The lower range equivalents of Mionnet scale, irregular in its intervals, are given herewith: Mionnet Scale, Size 1 = 9.0 mm. • Size 2 = 12.5 mm. • Size 3 = 15.0 mm. • Size 4 = 18.0 mm. • Size 5 = 21.5 mm. • Size 6 = 24.0 mm. • Size 7 = 26.5 mm. • In the United States the use of the Mionnet Scale was short lived, and by the 1870s it had been replaced in most uses by the American Scale, which had been devised by Mark W. Collet and had been adopted by the Philadelphia Numismatic and Antiquarian Society in September 1858, this new scale being in 32nds of an inch (*e.g.*, Size 16 = 16/32" or half an inch).

> 101.
>
> Ob: An Eagle, with expanded wings, facing to the right. A serpent under his feet. Below the eagle, the date "1837."
>
> Rev: "*Feuchtwanger's Composition,*" outside of a wreath. Within the wreath, "*One Cent.*"
>
> Edge, milled. Metal, German silver. Size, 4½.

It is seen that the only two varieties of Feuchtwanger three-cent pieces known to Bushnell at the time were the basic circulation styles, one with the State Arms of New York and the other with an eagle, both with a reverse utilizing a wreath. Further, the Russell "I.O.U. 12½c" token, featuring a Feuchtwanger cent obverse die, is nowhere mentioned, nor are the undated store cards from the mid-1830s, issued by Feuchtwanger and bearing the addresses of 277 Broadway and, separately, 2 Cortlandt Street.

Later in the work, under the heading of "Miscellaneous," which began a new numbering sequence, this item was listed, a piece that some (*e.g.*, Lyman H. Low, subsequently cited) would call a fantasy produced to the order of Bushnell:

> 24.
>
> Ob: An Eagle, with expanded wings, facing to the left, holding an olive branch in one talon, and three barbed arrows in the other. The shield of the United States upon his breast. "*American Silver.*"
>
> Rev: "*Token. 25 Cents. 1837.*"
>
> Edge, milled. Metal, Silver. Size, 7.[1]

It might be best said that although the Bushnell work was very extensive, it was simply a beginning in the study of early nineteenth-century tokens.

On February 28, 1859, and extending for five days thereafter, a collection described by Augustus Sage in *Catalogue of the Extensive and Valuable Cabinet of Coins and Medals, the Property of Henry Bogert, Esq.*, crossed the block at the auction sale room of Bangs, Merwin & Co., 13 Park Row, New York City.[2] Included were these relevant items, 1344 to 1347, plus two others (see footnote):

> **Lot 1344:** Feuchtwanger Three Cents, 1837. *Obv.* An Eagle; German Silver. *Fine and extremely rare.* [Realized $2]
>
> **Lot 1345:** do. [ditto] *Obv.* Arms of New-York. *Fine.* [87¢]
>
> **Lot 1346:** do. One Cent, 1837. *Obv.* An Eagle. 3 pieces. [15¢ each]
>
> **Lot 1347:** do. Different die from above. *Very curious.* [90¢]
>
> **Lot 1348:** Wood's Silver token. *Very fine.* [44¢]
>
> **Lot 1349:** Curious Coin in German silver. One cent inside of a wreath, on each side. *Very Rare.* [$1.50][3]

On June 7, 1859, Sage presented *The Property of a Gentleman of this City* (James D. Foskett), which included a Feuchtwanger cent and three-cent piece, the last of the State of New York Arms style.

The *Entire Collection of American Copper & Silver Coins, Medals, Tokens, etc.*, formed by Benjamin Haines and catalogued by him was sold from January 19 to 23, 1863, at Bangs, Merwin & Co., and included these pieces:

> **Lot 1503:** "Dr. L. Feuchtwanger, Amer. Silver Composition, 377 Broadway, New York"; German silver, very fine and extremely rare. [$1.25]
>
> **Lot 1504:** Feuchtwanger, No. 2 Cortlandt St., New-York, similar to last, fine and very rare. [$1.50]
>
> **Lot 1714:** Obverse of Feuchtwanger cent; rev. E. Russell, I.O.U. 12½ c; extremely rare. [$2.37½]

W. Elliot Woodward, who had been gaining prominence since his first auction in 1860, from November 11 to 14, 1864, presented his *Catalogue of Selected Specimens from the American Portion of the Finotti Collection of Coins and Medals,* which he had purchased outright. Included were these items:

> **Lot 1626:** 1837 Feuchtwanger's Composition, three cents; rev. arms of New York; nearly proof, very rare. [$1.25]
>
> **Lot 1627:** 1837 Obv. Resembling the last; rev. Eagle on a rock. Very few of this variety struck, much rarer than the preceding, very fine. [$6.50]
>
> **Lot 1628:** 1837 Feuchtwanger's Composition, "one cent" on both sides; fine and very rare. [40¢][4]
>
> **Lot 1629:** 1837 Feuchtwanger's Composition, one cent; five different varieties, all very fine and scarce. [12¢ each]

---

[1] This listing would seem to indicate that Bushnell did not associate the token with Feuchtwanger, nor did he seem to be aware that "American Silver" was Feuchtwanger's term for his compound of German Silver (although "American Silver" could have had other meanings as well). If it was a fantasy piece, Bushnell does not seem to have paid it much notice in his listing, whereas he could have called it "very rare," etc.

[2] Bogert, a teenager (as was Sage), was Sage's partner in business.

[3] Some later historians thought this to be a Feuchtwanger's Composition cent, a muling of two reverse dies, but this is not likely, as it is not contiguous to the Feuchtwanger listings (but is separated by an irrelevant Wood's token). It almost certainly is a muling from another source. A likely candidate is the piece described by J. Hewitt Judd, M.D., *United States Pattern, Experimental and Trial Pieces*, 7th edition, Appendix C, p. 265: "CENT. Obv. ONE CENT within an olive wreath surrounded by a circle of dots. Rev. Similar design from a different die.(Adams-Woodin 150-151. Three or four known." The letter punches, wreath style, ribbon style, and beaded borders are completely different from the style of the 1837 Feuchtwanger cent.

[4] Probably the earlier-noted piece described by Judd, Appendix C, p. 265.

W. Elliot Woodward bought the collection of Joseph J. Mickley in 1867, sold the United States gold coins to William Sumner Appleton, and auctioned most of the rest at the Book Trade Sale Rooms of Messrs. Leavitt, Strebeigh & Co., Clinton Hall, New York City, in a multi-day event that began at 5:30 in the afternoon of October 28, 1867. These Feuchtwanger items were included:

> **Lot 2153:** Feuchtwanger's Three Cent Piece, 1837, eagle on a rock; very fine indeed, and extremely rare. [$7.50 to Crawford]
>
> **Lot 2154:** Feuchtwanger's Three Cent Piece, 1837, arms of New York; very fine, almost proof, scarce. [$1.50 to Crosby]
>
> **Lot 2155:** Feuchtwanger's Cents, 1837, five piece, all fine, different varieties. [25¢ each to Fellows]
>
> **Lot 2156:** Feuchtwanger's Cent, struck from two reverse dies, "One Cent" on both sides; very fine, rare. [$1.45 to Cohen][1]
>
> **Lot 2587:** Feuchtwanger, Dr. L. "American Silver Composition, 377 Broadway, N.Y."; rev. "Household furniture," &c.; German s., nearly p. This and the following are amongst the rarest of American Store Cards. [$4 to Bushnell[2]]
>
> **Lot 2588:** Feuchtwanger, Dr. L. "American Silver Composition, 2 Cortlandt St., N.Y."; rev. "Instruments," &c., German s., nearly p. [$4 to Levick]

On May 27, 1881, Édouard Frossard's *Catalogue of Ancient and Modern Silver and Copper Coins* noted on the title page that "Feuchtwanger Currency" was included, these items being presented on page 21 as follows:

> The following coins were the property of Dr. Feuchtwanger's family, and comprise the entire lot until lately in their possession.
>
> **Lot 536:** 1837 Eagle on a rock. Rev., FEUCHTWANGER'S COMPOSITION; wreath of oak, within which 3 THREE CENTS. Fine proof, and extremely rare. Size 16. [$19.50 to Lowe][3]
>
> **Lot 537:** 1837 Coat of arms of New York. Rev., Same inscription, but THREE CENTS, four stars, and two mullets within wreath of olive. Uncirculated and scarce. [$5 to C, presumably Chapman]
>
> **Lot 538:** Duplicate of last number. Very fine. [$1.75]
>
> **Lot 539:** Another. Same condition as last. [$1.62½][4]
>
> **Lot 540:** 1837 Eagle on a serpent. Rev., ONE CENT in wreath of laurel. Eight feathers to tail and serpent in large coils. Uncirculated. [[$1.87½ to Lowe]
>
> **Lot 541:** Duplicate of last. Uncirculated. [75¢]
>
> **Lot 542:** Another. Very fine. [50¢ to H, presumably Haseltine]
>
> **Lot 543:** From different dies. Eagle with seven feathers and pointed left wing. Uncirculated. [$1.50 to C]
>
> **Lot 544:** Another Cent from still different dies. Eagle with seven feathers and blunt left wing. Uncirculated. [$1.12½ to C]
>
> **Lot 545:** Duplicates of last. Very fine. 2 pieces. [25¢ each to H]
>
> **Lot 546:** The same obv., but reverse with delicate wreath; evidently from another die. Uncirculated. [$2.12½]
>
> **Lot 547:** 1864 Eagle displayed, grasping a serpent. Rev., The same as reverse of No. 536. Nearly proof and rare. [$4.25]
>
> **Lot 548:** Duplicate of last. Fine and rare. [$4.25 to Lowe]

It seems reasonable to assume that the preceding pieces were issued by or under the auspices of Dr. Feuchtwanger, including the 1837- and 1864-dated three-cent pieces with the "3 / THREE CENTS" used in both instances. Later, Frossard gave a report of the event:[5]

> The bidding on the Feuchtwanger currency was extremely spirited and the several pieces brought extraordinary high figures. An 1837 Eagle on a rock, three cent piece, in poor condition, sold at $19.50; 1837, Coat of Arms of New York, three cents, $5; the 1837 cents, nearly all from different dies averaged $1.25 each; the 1864, Eagle displayed, three cents, $4.25.
>
> Beside the pieces represented at this sale Dr. Feuchtwanger issued two or three store cards, all of the highest degree of rarity, and none of which have been in the possession of his family since his death. The Feuchtwanger currency will form the subject of an article which will appear in a future number of *Numisma.*

Charles I. Bushnell, whose 1858 study of tokens became a standard reference, died on September 17, 1880. In time, Bushnell's collection was offered intact by his son for $10,000, a sum that was not reached.[6] The highest tender received was from Lorin G. Parmelee, the Boston bean baker whose collection of regular issue United States coins was considered the second finest in America, purchased it for about $8,000 and extracted items of interest, then sought to dispose of the considerable remainder. Parmelee selected

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[1] Probably the earlier-noted piece described by Judd, Appendix C, p. 265.

[2] Bidding under the pseudonym of "Stevens."

[3] Francis Campbell, librarian at the American Numismatic Society, furnished prices realized and buyers' names for this sale, here adapted.

[4] Advances were in increments of 2½ cents, but in price lists these were either rounded to the lower or higher even cent amount, there being no particular consistency in this regard.

[5] *Numisma*, supplement, July 1881.

[6] Joel J. Orosz suggests that this figure might have been inspired by the $10,000 amount for which Joseph J. Mickley is said to have sold the remainder of his collection to W. Elliot Woodward in 1867 (cf. Orosz, "Mickley Countermark Mystery," *The Numismatist*, August 1995; also letter to the author, May 11, 1997).

Samuel Hudson Chapman and Henry Chapman to conduct a public auction sale of the remainder, much to the dismay of other older and, presumably, wiser dealers who viewed the Chapmans as brash upstarts.

The Bushnell holding was well known for its size and value, but few knew anything about its contents. In this connection, Frossard commented in the May 1882 issue of *Numisma:* "Until the appearance of the catalogue the collection of Mr. Bushnell was in one sense a mysterious one; but few even among his most intimate friends knew exactly what he had, few had seen his entire cabinet, he bought secretly and generally through others and under an assumed name."[1]

From June 20 to 24, 1882, the cabinet was offered by the Chapman brothers in a work titled *Catalogue of the Celebrated and Valuable Collection of American Coins and Medals of the Late Charles I. Bushnell.* The catalogue, over 140 pages in length and printed on folio sheets, described 3,000 lots. The publication was of unprecedented *magnificence* in American numismatics and caused great consternation and jealousy among other dealers, much of whose envy was reflected in print in their own catalogues, where every typographical or numismatic error that could be found in the Bushnell opus was reprinted with glee.[2] After all, the brothers were mere youths, mere striplings, not bearded oracles from the old school.

The Bushnell sale was a non-event Feuchtwanger-wise, but the catalogue does serve to reflect that nearly all of the tokens relating to Feuchtwanger that Bushnell once owned had disappeared, possibly to Parmelee, the Boston collector who had purchased the cabinet intact and who had extracted desired items (including nos. 99-101 related to Feuchtwanger, as per Bushnell's 1858 study). Moreover, the solo Feuchtwanger piece listed in the Bushnell sale had been bought from Woodward's sale of the Mickley Collection in 1867 and was not the piece which Bushnell owned in 1858 when he published his memorable catalogue on store cards:

> **Lot 1045:** Feuchtwanger, Dr. L. New York. Household furniture, etc. Feuchtwanger composition. Uncirculated. Extremely rare. From Mickley sale, $4.[3] [$3.50]
>
> **Lot 1138:** Mr. Bushnell's private collection of New York Store Cards from which he compiled his book on American Store Cards, each made up in a separate paper and numbered by his book just as he left them. Nos. 6, 48, 76, 89, 90, 97, 99, 100, 101, 103, 105, 107, 108, 109 are out. Many of these cards are in extra fine condition, and a number are very rare; it would be a difficult matter to duplicate them. For want of time we sell them together. The Talbot, Allum and Lee cents are proofs. Several are silver, and many worth from $1 to $2 each. [$40 the collection]

From February 25 to 29, 1884, Édouard Frossard was busy with his sale of the *Large and Valuable Medallic Collection of Isaac F. Wood,* Part II. Wood, a gentleman of leisure, devoted much of his life to his hobbies, including coins and books, and for a time served as librarian of the American Numismatic and Archaeological Society. He also employed George H. Lovett (in particular) to create for him a series of commemorative medals to be sold to numismatists, apparently with only limited success, for such pieces are scarce today. Relevant Feuchtwanger items in the Wood sale included these:

> **Lot 1384:** Obverse, FEUCHTWANGER AMERICAN SILVER COMPOSITION 2 CORTLANDT ST NEW YORK in 7 lines. Rev. HOUSE AND HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE, INSTRUMENTS, BEER PUMPS, PILLARS, GRATES, SPOONS, FORKS, AND DINING SETS in 6 lines. Composition metal; fine and of extreme rarity. [Size] 16$^{1}/_{2}$.
>
> **Lot 1385:** Obverse, DR L. FEUCHTWANGER AMERICAN SILVER COMPOSITION 377 BROAD-WAY NEW-YORK. Rev. Same as last. Composition metal; fine and extremely rare. 16$^{1}/_{2}$.
>
> **Lot 1386:** Duplicate of last number. Barely fair; pierced.
>
> **Lot 1387:** Eagle on a rock. 1837. Rev. THREE CENTS in wreath of laurel. FEUCHTWANGER'S COMPOSITION. Reeded edge; very fine and rare. 15$^{1}/_{2}$.
>
> **Lot 1388:** Arms of New York. 1837. Rev. THREE CENTS, four stars and two roses in wreath of laurel. FEUCHTWANGER'S COMPOSITION. Reeded edge: very fine. 15$^{1}/_{2}$.
>
> **Lot 1389:** Eagle grasping a snake. 1864. Rev. 3 THREE CENTS in wreath of oak. FEUCHTWANGER'S COMPOSITION. Reeded edge; very fine. 15$^{1}/_{2}$.
>
> **Lot 1390:** Feuchtwanger cents. 1837. Fine to uncir. 4 pcs.

The collection of coins and tokens formed by J.N.T. Levick, catalogued by Woodward, crossed the block at Bangs & Co., New York, from May 26 to 29, 1884. Levick was one of the grand nineteenth-century figures in the field of token collecting, making these his first love, after achieving considerable success in other series (most notably large copper cents).

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[1] The secretive Bushnell was the social opposite of the gregarious J.J. Mickley. On the other hand, Mickley's coins were stolen (in 1867), while Bushnell's remained unknown to the public and secure on the second floor of his home.

[2] Frossard in particular was critical and in *Numisma* presented a list of the errors he could find. However, a perusal of Frossard's own printed works would also disclose many errors.

[3] When bidding in the Mickley sale Bushnell used the pseudonym "Stevens."

The offering was the most extensive to be presented up to that time, and even included that pesky double-sided ONE CENT piece which, by now, had been adopted into the series, never mind that it had no known connection:

> **Lot 413:** 1837 Eagle standing; rev., Feuchtwanger's Composition, 3 Cents; almost proof, *extremely rare.* This and all the other pieces in this series are of Feuchtwanger's metal. Plate. [$3.50]
>
> **Lot 414:** 1837 Arms of New York; rev., like the last; equally fine, *rare.* Plate. [$1.90]
>
> **Lot 415:** 1864 Eagle and serpent; rev., Feuchtwanger, etc., three cents; nearly proof, *rare.* Plate. [$2.90]
>
> **Lot 416:** Feuchtwanger American Silver Composition, 2 Courtland St.; rev., Household Furniture, etc.; perfect, *very rare.* [$4][1]
>
> **Lot 417:** The same, on thicker planchet; finer than the last and *equally rare.* Plate. [$8.25]
>
> **Lot 418:** Feuchtwanger, Dr. L., 377 Broadway; rev., like the preceding; perfect, *extremely rare.* [$8]
>
> **Lot 419:** 1837 Feuchtwanger Cents. A series, believed to be complete; all different, and all very fine. 14 pieces. [16¢ each]
>
> **Lot 420:** Feuchtwanger Cent. One Cent on both sides; fine, *very rare.* [$3]
>
> **Lot 421:** 1837 Obv. Of Feuchtwanger's Cent; rev., R.E. Russell, I.O.U. 12½c., fine, *extremely rare.* [$6.50]

Catalogued by David U. Proskey, for his firm, the New York Coin & Stamp Company, the Lorin G. Parmelee Collection crossed the auction block at Bangs & Co., New York City, June 25 to 27, 1890. The following Feuchtwanger pieces were included, some or all of which may have come from the Bushnell Collection, but no provenances were given:

> **Lot 263:** New York: Feuchtwanger's Three Cents: eagle on rock, 1837. Rx in olive wreath THREE / CENTS /, FEUCHTWANGER'S COMPOSITION; small counterstamp at top; uncirc. [$3.75]
>
> **Lot 264:** —Same in *copper:* pierced at top: fine; believed to be unique in this metal. [$3.50]
>
> **Lot 265:** —Similar design, but different executed: eagle and rocks, 1837. Rx in oak wreath 3 / THREE / CENTS / FEUCHTWANGER'S COMPOSITION; uncirc.; *very* rare. [$8.50]
>
> **Lot 266:** — Arms of N.Y. State, 1837. Rx value in olive wreath, 4 stars and 2 rosettes: uncirc.: also two cents of well known type: fine; 3 pcs. [35¢ each]
>
> **Lot 267:** —1864 displayed eagle on serpent. Rx same as that on lot 265; uncirc. [$1.05]

The cabinet of Benjamin Betts was brought to auction on January 11 and 12, 1898, catalogued by Lyman H. Low and sold at the Collector's Club, 351 Fourth Avenue, New York. By this time the knowledgeable Low was well known as a specialist in Hard Times tokens, not to overlook many other series. The Betts Collection included these:

> **Lot 69:** Feuchtwanger, Dr. L. AMERICAN / SILVER / COMPOSITION / 377 / BROAD-WAY. Rx House & household, furniture, etc. Very fine and rare. [$5]
>
> **Lot 70:** Feuchtwanger, etc., sim. To last (Dr. L. omitted), 2 / CORTLANDT St. R. From same die as 69. Very fine, rarer than the preceding. [$5]
>
> **Lot 71:** 1837 Eagle *l.* on rock. Rx FEUCHTWANGER'S COMPOSITION. Oak wreath open at top, 3 / THREE / CENTS. L. 77.[2] Slight defect on edge before eagle's head, barely reaching border milling. Very fine, and the rarest of the Feuchtwangers. [$8]
>
> **Lot 72:** 1837 Another, similar, laurel wreath and THREE / CENTS. Rx New York State arms. L. 75. Fine. [$2]
>
> **Lot 73:** 1837 Varieties of Feuchtwanger's One Cent. Eagle *r.*, serpent in his talons. L. 78. Good to fine. 6 pieces. [42¢]
>
> **Lot 74:** 1864 Obv. From same die as 71. Rx Eagle on serpent, wingspread, head turned *l.* V. Fine, rare. [$1.50]
>
> **Lot 233:** Russell, R.E. / I. O.U / 12½c. Rx Eagle, etc., 1837. From one of Feuchtwanger's dies. Fine, very rare. F. metal. Plate. [$3]

After publishing a monograph on the series in 1886 and distributing his knowledge through catalogue listings and in the *American Journal of Numismatics* (1899), in 1900 Lyman H. Low published his master work, *Hard Times Tokens,* which assigned 164 numbers to as many varieties. A new "Low number" system was used, which caught on quickly with numismatists and which is still used by some today (although beginning in the late twentieth century, "Rulau numbers," by Russell Rulau, began to replace them).

Low-50 is included, although Low did not identify it with Feuchtwanger, nor is it known today if it is a Feuchtwanger product:

> **Low No. 50:** *Obv.* TOKEN / 25 CENTS / 1837 in large letters and figures. *Rev.* AMERICAN SILVER in small letters above an eagle, type of 49; the shield

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[1] Apparently Lot 2588 from the 1867 Mickley sale; see earlier citation.

[2] "L" or Low number from Low's 1886 monograph on Hard Times tokens, a 16-page listing that was made obsolete by his 1900 work, *Hard Times Tokens,* which employed a different numbering system.

> has three pales.... Size 26.[1] This piece was first introduced to the public by the late Charles I. Bushnell in his work published in 1857 [*sic;* should be 1858]. It next appeared in his collection of coins, which was dispersed at auction in 1881 [*sic;* should be 1882]. I purchased the piece for a collector who still retains it; no other is known to me, and I have no hesitancy in stating that my conclusions are, that it is unique and was struck from dies made by Bushnell's order. I hold a similar unfavorable opinion [of certain other tokens, not in German silver or related to Feuchtwanger].[2]
>
> **Low No. 117:** *Obv.* EXCELSIOR, Arms of the State of New York. Below, 1837. *Rev.* FEUCHTWANGER'S COMPOSITION within an olive wreath, * * * / THREE / CENTS / * * * Metal, Feuchtwanger's. Size 25. [Here is inserted a description of various directory addresses for Feuchtwanger.]
>
> **Low No. 118:** *Obv.* An eagle *l.*, wings raised, standing on a rock. Below, 1837. *Rev.* FEUCHTWANGER'S above, and * COMPOSITION * below. Within an olive wreath, THREE / CENTS. Metal, Feuchtwanger's. Size 25.
>
> **Low No. 119:** *Obv.* Copy of No. 118, but the eagle and rocks are smaller and the date larger. *Rev.* FEUCHTWANGER'S COMPOSITION and within an oak wreath open at the top, 3 / THREE / CENTS. Metal, Feuchtwanger's. The reverse of this piece was used in 1864, with a new obverse. Size 25.
>
> **Low No. 120:** *Obv.* Type of No. 118, with eagle standing *r.* and holding a serpent in his talons; below, 1837. *Rev.* FEUCHTWANGER'S above, and * COMPOSITION below. Within an olive wreath, ONE / CENT. Metal, Feuchtwanger's. Size 18½.
>
> **Low No. 128:** *Obv.* From one of the dies of 120. *Rev.* * R.E. RUSSELL * above, and [series of stars] below, completing the circle. In field, [stars] / I.O.U / [12_c. Metal, Feuchtwanger's. Size 18½.[3]

In August 1906 Lyman H. Low issued a booklet, "Hard Times Tokens. Supplement," which added 19 new numbers to the list and corrected or revised certain earlier listings, including this:

> **Low No. 119:** Of this very rare Feuchtwanger Three Cent piece, the late Edward Cogan, in his catalogue of the I.F. Wood Collection, sold May 19-21, 1873, under Lot No. 1028, remarks: "A fine proof, but I believe it was struck since 1837." I think this is worthy of insertion here, in view of the fact that the very few we have met with were in such a high state of perfection.
>
> In this connection, we have to think of the 1864 piece with the same reverse which this number has. At the present time I am inclined to believe that it may be a member of the same family referred to in my note following No. 50 [in the 1900 study]. It is somewhat significant that one of them was in the Bushnell Sale.[4]

In an article in the June 1913 issue of *The Numismatist*, "Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger," Edgar H. Adams, noted these varieties (a list which could be expanded today, in view of new discoveries:

> **No. 1**—The card bearing the address "377 Broadway."
>
> **No. 2**—The card bearing the address "2 Cortlandt Street."
>
> **No. 3**—Three Cents. Arms of New York. Low 117.
>
> **No. 4**—Three Cents. Eagle on rock. Rev. same as No. 3. Low 118.[5]
>
> **No. 5**—Three Cents. Eagle on rock. Rev. "3" at top of wreath. Low 119.
>
> **No. 6**—Cent. There are at least a dozen different varieties of this piece. Low 120.
>
> **No. 7**—Three Cents. Eagle with snake. 1864. Rev. same as No. 5.
>
> Many tokens of the Hard Times period mentioned by Mr. Low were struck in Feuchtwanger metal.[6] Chief among these were Philadelphia pieces, "50 Cents," and "Shilling," respectively Low 152 and 149; the Maverick Coach and Roxbury Coach pieces, Low 116 and 129; the Baker piece, 108; the Russell 12½ cent piece, Low 128; the C.W. Bender, Low 181, and many other pieces not given by Mr. Low, such as those of Day, Newell & Day of New York City; Evans [Evens], of Cincinnati, and of the restaurant checks of Sweeny of Chatham Street, and Merritt & Langley of Dey Street, New York City.

The estate collection of W.W.C. Wilson, of Montreal, contained some of the most important tokens and medals to be auctioned in the twentieth century. The sale catalogue dated November 16-18, 1925, written by Wayte Raymond, included these:

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[1] Size expressed in the American Scale of multiples of 1/32nd of an inch.

[2] Russell Rulau, in the 2nd edition of *Standard Catalog of U.S. Tokens 1700-1900*, added this: "However, Wayte Raymond believed HT-74 was struck by Feuchtwanger, not Bushnell. It went into the F.C.C. Boyd Collection. A second specimen is now known and possibly a third. Verified specimens are in the John Ford [ex Boyd] and Donald Partrick Collections." • The reverse eagle is a copy of that found on the contemporary quarter dollar (type introduced in 1831).

[3] Today, the Russell piece is generally catalogued under the tokens of New York City (*e.g.*, Rulau, *Standard Catalog of U.S. Tokens 1700-1900*), but no early students of the series gave any attribution or related information concerning his biography or location.

[4] Apparently, Low was unaware that in 1864-5 there was a legitimate non-numismatic purpose for Dr. Feuchtwanger making the 1864-dated piece and, perhaps, the 1837-dated piece as well: to submit to the Mint in connection with his proposal to sell metal to the Mint.

[5] This variety is *usually* seen with the hallmark "JMP" in a small rectangular punch, impressed near the top of the reverse; the left upright of M also serves as the upright of the J, while the right upright of the M serves as the upright of the P. It is possible that JMP purchased these in quantity from Feuchtwanger, and for purposes of redeeming them—which Feuchtwanger advertised to do—the hallmark identified the distributor. City directories of the era list multiple "J.M.P." candidates, but none specifically attributable to this stamp.

[6] Actually, it is not known whether certain of these were struck in Feuchtwanger's Composition, or whether the German silver was from another source. The only one of these other pieces with a direct link is the Low-128 Russell token.

> **Lot 300:** Low 117. Feuchtwanger 3 Cents. Arms of New York. Uncirculated. *Plate 5.* [$6]
>
> **Lot 301:** Low 118. Large eagle *l.* on rocks, 1837 below. Rx FEUCHTWANGER'S COMPOSITION. Within wreath—THREE CENTS. Very fine. Ex. Rare. *Plate 5.* [$32]
>
> **Lot 302:** Low 120. Feuchtwanger's Cents. Varieties. Mostly Unc. 6 pcs. [$1.25]
>
> **Lot 304:** Low 128. Obverse of 120. Rx R.E. RUSSELL I.O.U. 12½. Fine but crack in planchet. Extremely rare. *Plate 5.* [$16][1]

On June 3, 1941, Fort Worth, Texas, dealer B. Max Mehl offered to mail bidders the most important collection of his career—the cabinet of William Forrester Dunham, which Mehl had purchased intact in 1939. Featured were the famous and rare 1804 silver dollar and the even rarer (three known) 1822 half eagle, along with thousands of other coins.

Beginning in 1939, Mehl had privately offered selected items from the Dunham Collection to certain of his important clients, including John Work Garrett (Baltimore), Amon Carter (Fort Worth), and Charles Williams (Cincinnati), among others. The net result was that by June 3 a number of the prizes had already been sold—but this information was kept hush-hush.[2] As if this did not lend a complication to anyone wanting to find out today what *really* happened with the Dunham sale, in many instances duplicates of the listed pieces were sold to different buyers, each of whom believed he had purchased *the Dunham specimen* of a given coin.[3] Many of the Hard Times tokens listed in the catalogue were purchased by Donald M. Miller, the well-known token specialist who lived in Pennsylvania, who was chagrined to later learn that some of the same "rarities" had been bought by someone else as well—Dunham had many duplicates!

Adding to the curiosity of the situation was Dunham's practice of counterstamping a tiny "D" letter, his surname initial, on many of his Hard Times tokens as well as certain other issues (including on a cloud above the eagle on the reverse of his 1804 silver dollar). The writer's Low-128 (R.E. Russell 12½c token) is from the Dunham Collection, earlier from Wilson, now with not one but three tiny "D" letters imprinted on the reverse—so subtly that a magnifying glass is needed to see them. Whether this "permanent pedigree" stamp adds to or detracts from the value of my token I have not decided. I think I like the idea—for *just this one piece.*

Regarding the Feuchtwanger series, the following Dunham listings are relevant:

> **Lot 2683:** Low 117. Feuchtwanger, Three Cents. Arms of the State of New York, date, 1837, below. Reverse, value in wreath. Milled edge. Very fine. Scarce and interesting. ["prices realized list" $4.20]
>
> **Lot 2684:** Low 118. Eagle on rock, date below. Reverse, similar to last, Feuchtwanger Three Cents. Slightly cracked planchet. About fine. Extremely rare. High auction record. [$51]
>
> **Lot 2685:** Low 119. 1837 Feuchtwanger Three Cents. Obverse similar to last but of an entirely different die. Reverse, large figure 3 at opening of wreath, and in wreath, the value THREE CENTS. Brilliant proof. Excessively rare. I can find no auction record. Valued at $100. [$105]
>
> **Lot 2686:** Low 120. Feuchtwanger One Cent, 1837. Size of small cent. Eagle with snake. Reverse value. Extremely fine. [$1.20]
>
> **Lot 2693:** Low 128. R.E. Russell, I.O.U. 12½c. Feuchtwanger metal. Very fine. Extremely rare. Priced at $35 nearly thirty years ago. [$25.50]

Reminiscences of William P. Brown

Although it would be tempting to include more about Feuchtwanger, I ring down the curtain now, lest the sketch turn into a book, but not before including some information about one of the longest-lived, most active, but only lightly chronicled dealers in New York City, William P. Brown.

Brown began his numismatic activities in the 1860s, and by 1870 operated a dealership at 28 John Street. In September of that year he published the first of 12 issues of *De Kuriositi Kabinet.*[4] Early issues had the first page printed with words spelled phonetically, after which the idea was abandoned, and the title became *The Curiosity Cabinet.*

In the same decade he moved to 145 Nassau Street, but in early 1882 Édouard Frossard wrote, "Mr. Wm.

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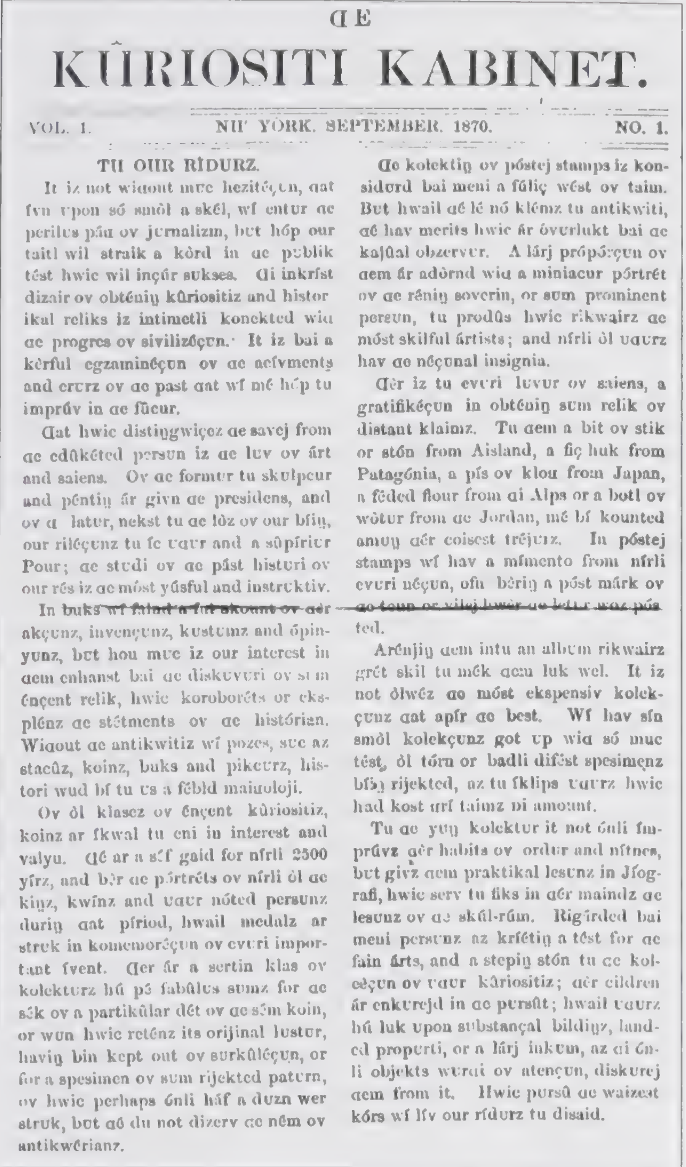
[1] Later in the Dunham Collection (1941).

[2] Mehl died in 1957. Certain of this information came to light in later years through his friend and colleague Abe Kosoff (who handled Mehl's numismatic estate), Garrett correspondence preserved by The Johns Hopkins University (certain extracts from which are printed in *The History of United States Coins as Illustrated by the Garrett Collection*, 1979), discussions between the author and Donald M. Miller, among other sources.

[3] From the introduction: "The major portion of this great collection of Hard Times tokens was originally formed, over a period of many years, by the eminent numismatist, Carl Wurtzbach, of Lee, Massachusetts, from whom Mr. Dunham purchased the collection...." In addition, Dunham bought widely elsewhere, including from Raymond's 1925 sale of the W.W.C. Wilson Collection.

[4] Listed by Remy Bourne, *American Numismatic Periodicals 1860-1960*, Book I, 1990.



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KÛRIOSITI KABINET.

VOL. 1. NIU YORK, SEPTEMBER, 1870. NO. 1.

TU OUR RÍDURZ.

It iz not wiɑout mʊc hezitéçʊn, ɑat fvn ʊpon só smól a skél, wí entur ɑe perilʊs páɑ ov jʊrnalizm, bʊt hóp our taitl wil straik a kòrd in ɑe pʊblik tést hwic wil inçúr sʊksea. ɑi inkríst dizair ov obténiŋ kûriositiz and historikal reliks iz intimetli konekted wiɑ ɑe progres ov sivilizéçʊn. It iz bai a kèrful egzaminéçʊn ov ɑe acívments and erʊrz ov ɑe past ɑat wí mé hóp tu imprûv in ɑe fûcur.

ɑat hwic distiŋgwiçez ɑe savej from ɑe edûkéted persʊn iz ɑe lʊv ov árt and saiens. Ov ɑe formʊr tu skʊlpcur and péntiŋ ár givn ɑe presidens, and ov ɑe latʊr, nekst tu ɑe lòz ov our bíiŋ, our riléçʊnz tu ɑe ʊaʊr and a sûpíriʊr Pour; ɑe stʊdi ov ɑe pást histʊri ov our rés iz ɑe móst yúsful and instrʊktiv.

In buks ~~wí faind a fúl akount ov aér~~ akçʊnz, invençʊnz, kustʊmz and ópinyʊnz, bʊt hou mʊc iz our interest in ɑem enhanst bai ɑe diskʊvʊri ov sʊm énçent relik, hwic koroboréts or eksplénz ɑe stétments ov ɑe histórian. Wiɑout ɑe antikwitiz wí pozes, sʊc az stacûz, koinz, buks and pikcʊrz, histori wud bí tu ʊs a fébld maiɑoloji.

Ov ól klasez ov énçent kûriositiz, koinz ar íkwal tu eni in interest and valyu. ɑé ar a sêf gaid for nírli 2500 yírz, and bèr ɑe pórtréts ov nírli ól ɑe kiŋz, kwínz and ʊaʊr nóted persʊnz duriŋ ɑat píriod, hwail medalz ar strʊk in komemoréçʊn ov evʊri important ívent. ɑer ár a sertin klas ov kolektʊrz hú pé fabûlʊs sʊmz for ɑe sék ov a partikûlar dét ov ɑe sém koin, or wʊn hwic reténz its orijinal lustʊr, haviŋ bin kept out ov sʊrkûléçʊn, or for a spesimen ov sʊm rijekted patʊrn, ov hwic perhaps ónli háf a duzn wer strʊk, bʊt aé du not dizerv ɑe ném ov antikwérianz.

ɑe kolektiŋ ov póstej stamps iz konsidʊrd bai meni a fúliç wést ov taim. Bʊt hwail aé lé nó klémz tu antikwiti, aé hav merits hwic ár óvʊrlukt bai ɑe kajûal obzervʊr. A lárj própórçʊn ov ɑem ár adòrnd wiɑ a miniacur pórtrét ov ɑe réniŋ soverin, or sʊm prominent persʊn, tu prodûs hwic rikwairz ɑe móst skilful ártists; and nírli ól ʊaʊrz hav ɑe néçʊnal insignia.

ɑèr iz tu evʊri lʊvʊr ov saiens, a gratifikéçʊn in obténiŋ sʊm relik ov distant klaimz. Tu ɑem a bit ov stik or stón from Aisland, a fiç huk from Patagónia, a pís ov klou from Japan, a féded flour from ɑi Alps or a botl ov wótʊr from ɑe Jordan, mé bí kounted amʊŋ aér coisest tréjʊrz. In póstej stamps wí hav a mímento from nírli evʊri néçʊn, ofn bèriŋ a póst márk ov ~~ɑe toun or vilej hwèr ɑe letʊr woz pós~~ted.

Arénjiŋ ɑem intu an albʊm rikwairz grét skil tu mék ɑem luk wel. It iz not ólwéz ɑe móst ekspensiv kolekçʊnz ɑat apír ɑe best. Wí hav sín smól kolekçʊnz got ʊp wiɑ só mʊc tést, ól tórn or badli difést spesimenz bíiŋ rijekted, az tu íklips ʊaʊrz hwic had kost ɑrí taimz ɑi amount.

Tu ɑe yʊŋ kolektʊr it not ónli ímprûvz aér habits ov ordʊr and nítnes, bʊt givz ɑem praktikal lesʊnz in Jíografi, hwic serv tu fiks in aér maindz ɑe lesʊnz ov ɑe skûl-rûm. Rigárded bai meni persʊnz az kríétiŋ a tést for ɑe fain árts, and a stepiŋ stón tu ɑe kolekçʊn ov ʊaʊr kûriositiz; aér cildren ár enkʊrejd in ɑe pʊrsût; hwail ʊaʊrz hú luk upon sʊbstançal bildiŋz, landed propʊrti, or a lárj inkʊm, az ɑi ónli objekts wʊrɑi ov atençʊn, diskʊrej ɑem from it. Hwic pʊrsû ɑe waizest kórs wí lív our rídurz tu disaid.

The first page of Vol. 1, No. 1 of the *Kuriositi Kabinet,* issued by William P. Brown, featured phonetic spelling, interesting enough it its time, but painfully difficult to read. (Library of Dr. Joel J. Orosz)

P. Brown, of 145 Nassau St., was burned out in the recent large fire on Park Row. He lost most of his stock of coins and postage stamps, and now informs us that he is going out of the business."[1]

In the same vein, Ebenezer Locke Mason, Jr., reported:[2]

> We regret to learn that our old and valued friend and numismatic co-laborer, William P. Brown, was a victim to the ravages of the recent terrible fire at Park Row, Beekman and Nassau Streets, New York, where a number of lives were lost. Mr. Brown, who has been for many years a coin and stamp dealer, occupied a room on the fourth floor, (Beekman Street side) in the unfortunate building, and lost nearly all his stock in trade.
>
> The following letter was received from our friend in reply to an inquiry concerning his escape from the fire, etc.
>
> New York, Feb. 8, 1882.
>
> Mr. Mason.—What few coins and stamps were left in the safe will be sold at auction shortly by Scott & Co. I have gone into the short hand business. *W.P. Brown.*

However, he remained as active as ever with sales of rare coins and stamps.

In January 1895, Augustus G. Heaton, as part of "A Tour Among the Coin Dealers," serialized in *The Numismatist,* commented that in New York City in a front room in a third floor location on Broadway was to be found W.P. Brown, "a rather taciturn and bearded philosopher," who was primarily involved with stamps, but who had some coins on hand.

In June 1900 (erroneously dated May 1900) *The Numismatist* printed a notice that Brown had relocated his offices to rooms in the Park Row Building, 13 Ann Street. "When business is not rushing he varies the monotony in going up the 33 stories of the building and looking down on the common rabble beneath. The building is a city by itself, some 3,500 people finding homes or employment within."

In 1905 Brown was at 212 Broadway, where his coin and stamp shop drew many visitors.

Years later, Thomas L. Elder, who by that time had auctioned much of the coin stock from Brown's estate, recalled his long-departed friend:[3]

> He held forth as a stamp and coin dealer on lower Broadway, New York, since 1860.... No more unique character has adorned the business. "Don't come to New York," he wrote me in 1903, when I lived in Pittsburgh. "We have enough coin dealers in New York."
>
> "Well, Elder, I have sold my entire stamp stock," he informed me one day [in 1904] at 65 Nassau Street. Next time I called he seemed to have as big a stamp stock as ever [and said he had acquired a new inventory].
>
> Before that time, Brown had a small store on Ann Street, near the Post Office. He once ran a restaurant in connection with his stamp and coins. You could look at coins or stamps, or buy bean soup, a hot dog, and a sandwich. His restaurant soon flopped into history.
>
> Brown claimed to be a Socialist. He recommended Socialism for others, anyway. He never tired of attacking the capitalists, but as he grew wealthy and quite a capitalist himself, his agitations became somewhat subdued. For a time he printed a small magazine devoted chiefly to attacks on the capitalists. These copies bombarded his friends, including myself. Brown

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[1] *Numisma,* March 1882.

[2] March, 1882, *Mason's Coin Collectors' Herald* Vol. III., pg. 60:

[3] Edited and adapted from his articles in *Hobbies* magazine, October and December 1935.

handled not only stamps and coins, but paper money, old newspapers, Indian relics, fossils, gems, and curios. He kept a window filled with coins, "California gold charms," curios, and miscellaneous junk.

At 65 Nassau Street he had a little "hole in the wall," a tiny shop. He built an upstairs to it, reached by a stepladder, and for a short time kept a clerk seated on high, sorting out stamps. Past this small shop surged crowds of people along Nassau Street.[1] Brown had a fine location. Everybody saw Brown's window exhibit. Brown did business when other people went begging for it. Brown had first one, then two girl clerks, who remained in his employ for years. This curious old man sat on a stool, behind a small counter and showcase. His customers occupied likewise two small stools.

He wore a thin, scraggly beard, his face was long and thin, his eyes small and sharp, his manner was alert and nervous. He was on the joy right up to the moment he withdrew from the city to live at his house at Richmond Hill on Long Island. He had a farm in New England. His history as a coin and stamp dealer dates from the outbreak of the Civil War, another proof that the *Vicksburg Citizen* newspapers which he left to me are perfectly genuine. He had procured them from soldiers in Grant's army who had entered Vicksburg that July morning in 1863, and who had seized editor Swords' type as set up and ran off a few hundred copies as souvenirs. The late David Proskey, who used to work for Brown, pronounced these *Citizens* as perfectly genuine....

Brown had to compress his stocks of coins and stamps, as his box-like shop seemed to preclude free breathing. So he hit on the scheme of filling small wooden boxes, which he put together himself with tacks and tins, into which boxes he put coins of various kinds. He had a one-cent box, a two-cent box, [etc.], for visitors to paw over.... But if one should discover a really choice piece in a box, he would sometimes say, "Let me see that. I don't believe I can let you have that piece, it is too rare."... The shrewdness and alertness of Brown never deserted him for a moment.

Brown would clean coins by rubbing them on his coat sleeve, which would give the higher parts of the coin a rubbed appearance. I'll always remember the little tray of fake California one-quarter and one-half dollars which were always seen in the window for sale from 35¢ to 60¢ apiece....

One day we missed Brown. He had left New York for good and had gone to live at his house in Brooklyn, and we think took a clerk or so with him, maybe to assist him in keeping house or in watching his stock. A.R. Frey reported to me that shortly after Brown's removal, a large safe was sitting in Brown's backyard at Richmond Hill.... After that Brown did a small mail order business.... His mail sales averaged $35 to $50 per week.... He was then well past 80 years old....

Presently, the writer got a letter from Brown saying he had to put in his will that I was to sell his collection of coins.... Sometime after that, Mr. Fash, a local collector who had known Brown, was near Richmond Hill and thought he would drop in to see Brown. He found him alone, I believe. His assistants had left him and gone elsewhere. Brown came laboriously down to the door in his bare feet, preferring the comfort of being lightly clad in his own home. The next piece of news reached the writer, through Brown's executor. The old man had died....

After some dickering with the executors, a van came one day to my door with between 40 and 45 boxes of coins, curios, paper money, and what not.... The material was sold about 1930.... Brown had thousands of Uncirculated small cents of nearly all dates and mints, many of them Proof....

Fred Boyd bought most of these small cents, and this proved a good move on his part. Well, Brown had hundreds of gold dollars, which sold well, and perhaps 3,000 or more commemorative half dollars. One lot of about 100 Alabama half dollars was sold in a single lot to the elderly Mr. Windau for about $1.20 each.

Rudolph Kohler had appraised Brown's holdings at about $12,000, and about this amount was realized. Brown supported the Five Points Mission charity in New York City, and left his belongings, real estate, etc., to it.

The preceding sketch omits many details of what Brown did in his decades of numismatic experience, but reflects his personality. Obviously, he *enjoyed* what he did. Now, to the Feuchtwanger token connection:

The following "Reminiscences" were published by William P. Brown in his *Priced Catalogue of Hard Times Tokens*, issued from his home in the Richmond Hill district of New York City, where at the time he traded as the Stamp & Coin Exchange. Including are biographical notes as well as excerpts from a long listing of items for sale:

Reminiscences

When these tokens were made, and until the advent of the nickel cent in 1857, anything in the shape of a cent would pass. We recollect making a collection in 1859, going into stores offering to give good money for any old cents or wild-cat pennies [cent-size tokens] they had, then passing off those not wanted on the milkman, who growled but took them.

After getting together a fine collection of our old cents we took them over to one Rogers, a jeweler in Fulton St, who had coins in his window, to see if he would buy them.[1] He looked them over, picked out the best ones and said he would trade, and showed us a tray of old pieces. We found a half cent with liberty cap, and reeding on the edge, and the date worn off, and the trade was made![2]

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[1] For many years Nassau Street was the epicenter of the stamp trade in New York City. A long time afterward when a leading professional philatelist, Herman Herst, Jr., wrote his memoirs he titled the book *Nassau Street*. Numismatically, Nassau Street was home to several issuers of bank-note reporters, several engraving shops, and, over the years, several rare coin dealers—although today in numismatics Nassau Street is not remembered as being especially important.

Our next experience was we got hold of a Dr Feuchtwanger three cent piece in nickel with eagle on a rock, Low No 118 or 119, and showed it to an exchange broker in Greenwich St by the name of Gerdts, who had frames of coins hanging up.[3] He showed us one with the State arms of N Y, No 117 and said his was the scarce variety and ours the common one, and teased it out of us for 50c.

We then told this to John Bailey, a coin dealer who kept a stand on the City Hall park railing and he said: "Go back quick and I'll give you $5 for it."[4] We went back and offered an advance but he said he had sold it!

Dr Feuchtwanger was a chemist who experimented in metals, and tried to persuade the government to adopt nickel for a coinage, but they would not listen to him, so in 1837 he put thousands of his cents No 117 [*sic;* actually Low-120] into circulation to prove their utility, and after twenty years wear it was adopted.

The same W.P. Brown catalogue offered these items as part of an extensive Hard Times token list:

[Low] 117 Feuchtwanger's Composition, Three cents. R Arms of N Y 1837. N[ickel] $33 00

[Low] 118 O[bverse] same, Three cents in wreath. R Large eagle to left on rock, 1837 small. N 20 00

[Low] 119 O similar but 3 above THREE cents. R eagle and rock smaller, date larger. N. $30

[Low] 120 O like 117 but smaller, ONE CENT, R eagle to right grasping snake, varieties N. 15¢

Dr Feuchtwanger who was a chemist and experimented in metals, tried to persuade the government to use nickel for their coinage, and to show its utility circulated thousands of these nickel cents in 1837, of several die varieties, and now this metal is universally adopted.

[Low] 128 R E Russell, I O U 12½c. R of 120 small size. N. $20

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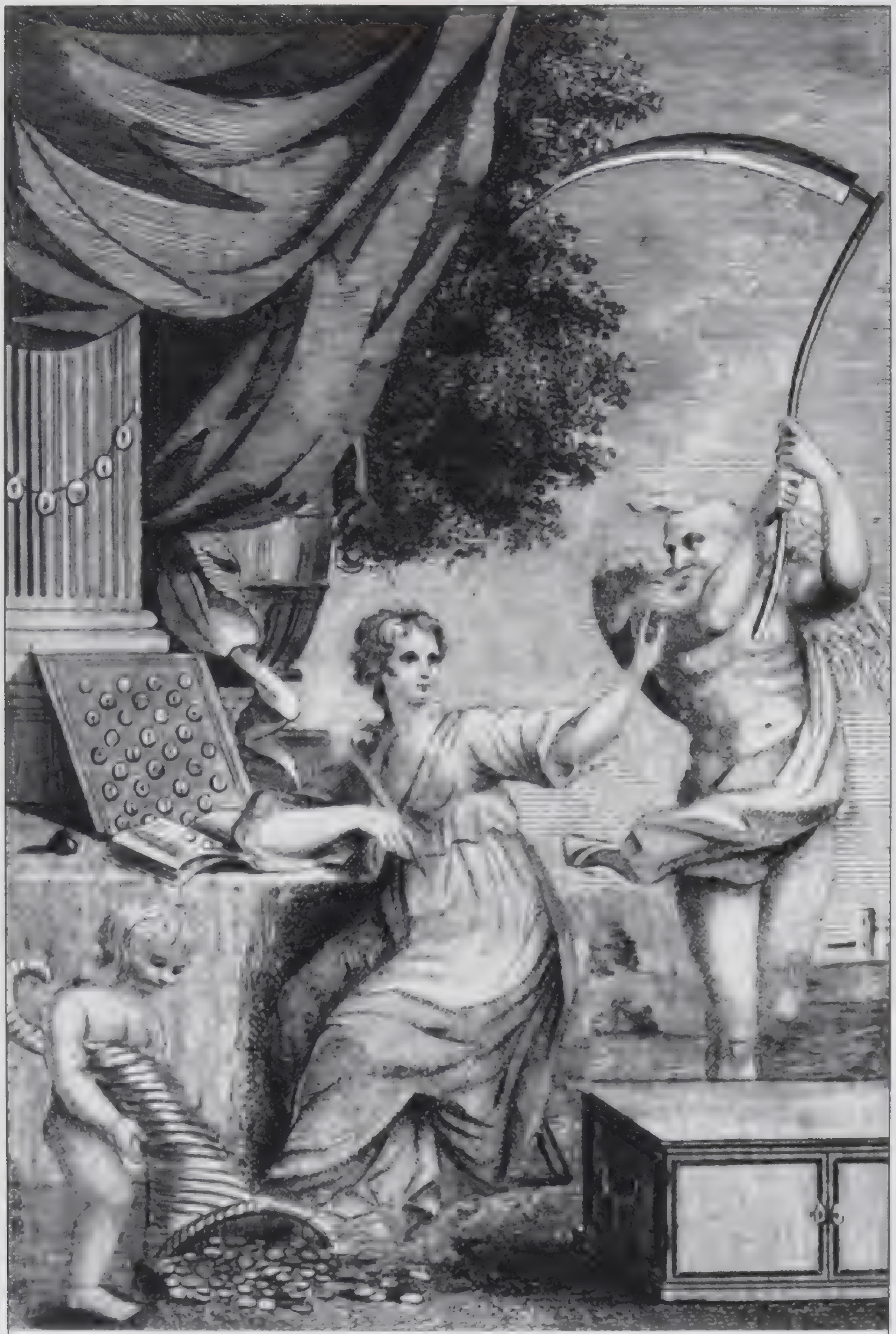
[1] This must have been the same Mr. Rogers of Fulton Street who sold a high grade 1799 cent to Lorenzo Abbey in the 1850s (cf. Emmanuel J. Attinelli, *Numisgraphics*, 1876, p. 30). • Probably Charles Rodgers [*sic*], who in the early 1860s had a jewelry and watch shop at 15 Fulton Street, New York City, and resided in Brooklyn.

[2] Such half cents had lettered, not reeded edges; however, there is a 1797 half cent variety with so-called "gripped" edge, showing indentations, but these can hardly be confused with the reeding seen on later era gold and silver coins.

[3] Henry D. Gerdts, a New York City coin dealer and specie broker, issued a list titled "Numismatic Hall" and "Numismatic Emporium" in May 1862 (cf. Emmanuel J. Attinelli, *Numisgraphics*, 1876, p. 89). At the time, specie brokers often encountered scarce, rare, and interesting coins, and from the 1830s through the 1870s many coins of importance were obtained by those in the trade. The 1861 city directory included a listing for him, identified as "numismatist," at 221 Greenwich Street. Gerdts issued a series of Civil War tokens, from dies by William Bridgens, bearing the inscription H.D. GERDTS. / BROKER / & / COIN DEALER / 240 / GREENWICH ST. N.Y. On December 16-19, 1879, W. Elliot Woodward (of Roxbury, MA) offered coins from Gerdts as part of a sale titled *W. Elliot Woodward's Twenty-Fifth Sale of Coins and Medals, Fractional Currency, Etc. Gerdts-Pecker-Mason-Truesdel Collections.* The cataloguer described Gerdts as formerly a "money broker and dealer in rare coins in New York" and noted that many of Gerdts' coins had been stolen recently.

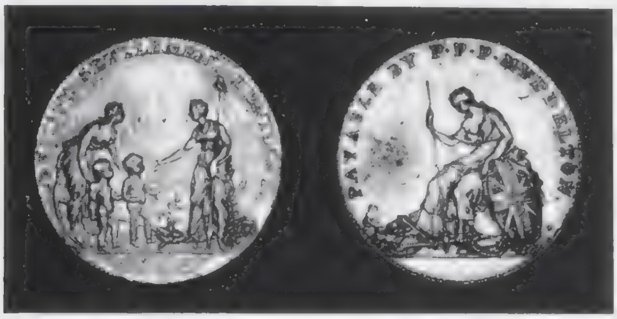
[4] City Hall Park, located on Broadway, was the venue for many peddlers and itinerant merchants who from carts, tents, and small portable wooden structures offered souvenirs, jewelry, etc., for sale to local residents and tourists. Bailey never became prominent in the New York City numismatic scene.



"History protecting Medals from the Ravages of Time," a frontispiece to an eighteenth-century guide to halfpenny-size and related tokens issued by the Soho Mint and others in England. At the time the collecting of such pieces was a popular pursuit, and this guide assisted with the appreciation of hundreds of different varieties. (*The Virtuoso's Companion and Coin Collectors Guide*, M. Denton, Vol. I to IV, 1795-6)

ADVENTURE NO. 18

A 1796 TOKEN "UNSURPASSED IN BEAUTY"



The 1796 British Settlement in Kentucky token, popularly called the Myddelton token, was struck in England but refers to the United States. In his 1875 work, The Early Coins of America, *Sylvester S. Crosby paid this piece the ultimate compliment: "In beauty of design and execution, the tokens are unsurpassed by any piece issued for American circulation." (Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr. Collection, 1996, Lot 95)*

* * *

A Planned Settlement in Kentucky

Contrasting the preceding adventure with its intricacies and byways, this one is a short take, a quickie, a numismatic appetizer rather than a main course....

In 1796 in England, Philip Parry Price, either surnamed Myddelton or from Myddelton, planned a real estate promotion whereby British citizens were to purchase tracts of land in Kentucky. To further this ambition, he commissioned the Soho Mint, a private enterprise operated by Matthew Boulton and James Watt in Birmingham, to create an appropriate token or medalet. Most likely, these pieces were produced primarily for the numismatic trade, rather than prospective customers for land. Today, several dozen examples exist in silver (primarily) and copper, all with Proof finish.

The obverse is inscribed BRITISH SETTLEMENT KENTUCKY and illustrates Hope (representing Britain) presenting two of her children to the goddess Liberty who welcomes them with an outstretched arm, with a cornucopia of plenty behind her, this in representation of the bounty of America.

The reverse shows the goddess Britannia, dejected and defeated, possibly an allegory to the loss of her citizens or, reaching back further in history, the British losing the Revolutionary War (the latter the suggestion in *Walter Breen's Complete Encyclopedia of U.S. and Colonial Coins*).

From an era in which tokens and medals often carried subtle as well as obvious messages, this particular piece ranks high in numismatic interest today. And, it has been thus for a long time. In his 1875 book, *The Early Coins of America,* Sylvester S. Crosby paid this piece the ultimate compliment: "In beauty of design and execution, the tokens are unsurpassed by any piece issued for American circulation."

Diesinker Küchler

The dies were cut by Konrad Heinrich Küchler (usually given as Conrad H. Küchler) a gifted artist who also prepared the three different Washington Seasons medal motifs about the same time.[1] Striking was accomplished at the Soho Mint, Birmingham, England.

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[1] See Adventure No. 48

Küchler was born in Flanders. It is likely that he was a diecutter in several German cities circa 1763-1775, his locations including Darmstadt, Mannheim, and Frankfurt-am-Main. He seems to have traveled widely in his work, including to Italy, France, and England. By the early 1790s he was in the employ of the Soho Mint, where he remained for a long time. While there he made dies for many coins and medals of England, including certain of the illustrious copper issues of 1797-1806. Dies were also cut for coins and medals relating to Russia, Portugal, Ireland, and Denmark.

Begun in 1759, the Soho Manufactory, as it was called, was well known by the time of Küchler's arrival. The facility was situated on Hockley Brook, a convenient source for power until it dried up. James Watt, maker of steam engines, came to the rescue and set up a steam plant which drove dozens of machines in a three-story structure which, with outbuildings, at one time employed about 600 people.

Although the "Soho Mint" division made circulating coins for the British government and produced issues for others as well, most attention was given to small metal goods, utensils, and notions, including tableware, buttons, candlesticks, buckles, salt cellars, cups, and more.

Matthew Boulton, an inventor *par excellence,* developed very sophisticated coining equipment that eclipsed anything in use in the United States until decades later. In September 1789 he described his latest coining press:

> It will coin much faster, with greater ease, with fewer persons, for less expense, and produce more beautiful pieces than any other machinery ever used for coining. The quantity of power or force requisite for each blow is exactly regulated and ascertained and is always uniformly the same, for the same pieces, thereby the dies are better preserved.
>
> One of my coining machines will work much faster by the attendance of one boy than others can do by any number of men. Can stop these machines at an instant by the power of a child and the same child can as instantaneously set them to work again. Can increase or diminish the force of the blow at pleasure, in any proportion. Can lay the pieces or blanks upon the die quite true and without care of practice and as fast as wanted. Can work day and night without fatigue by two sets of boys.
>
> The machine keeps an account of the number of pieces struck which cannot be altered from the truth by any of the persons employed. The apparatus strikes an inscription upon the edge with the same blow that it strikes the two faces. It strikes the ground of the pieces brighter than any other coining press can do. It strikes the pieces perfectly round, all of equal diameter, and exactly concentric with the edge, which cannot be done by any other machinery now in use.

In 1792 Matthew Boulton described the facility, his Hôtel de Monnaie, as his employee Jean-Pierre Droz and French clients called it. This is from Boulton's biographer:[1]

> The Mint consists of eight large coining-machines, which are sufficiently strong to coin the largest money in current use, or even medals; and each machine is capable of being adjusted in a few minutes, so as to strike any number of pieces of money from 50 to 120 per minute, in proportion to their diameter and degree of relief; and each piece being struck in a steel collar, the whole number are perfectly round and of equal diameter.
>
> Each machine requires the attendance of one boy of only 12 years of age and he has no labor to perform. He can stop the press one instant, and set it going the next.
>
> The whole of the eight presses are capable of coining, at the same time, eight different sizes of money, such as English crowns, [French] 6-livre pieces, 24-sous pieces, 12 sous, or the very smallest money that is used in France.
>
> The number of blows at each press is proportioned to the size of the pieces, say from 50 to 120 blows per minute, and if greater speed is needed, he has smaller machines that will strike 200 per minute....
>
> Mr. Boulton's new machinery works with less friction, less wear, less noise, than any apparatus ever before invented; for it is capable of striking at the rate of 26,000 [French] écus or English crowns, or 50,000 of half their diameter, in one hour, and of working night and day without fatigue to the boys, provided two sets of them work alternately for 10 hours each.

The Soho Manufactory declined in importance, and in 1850 its contents were sold at auction to Ralph G. Heaton, who continued to produce coins and medals. Among British numismatists in particular, the Soho Mint is famous today for the many varieties it coined. In the American-related series the number is far fewer and includes the aforementioned Myddelton token, the three varieties of 1796 Seasons Medals, and several tokens relating to George Washington. Dr. Richard Doty's 1998 book, *The Soho Mint & The Industrialization of Money,* tells all you would ever want to know about this fascinating facility.

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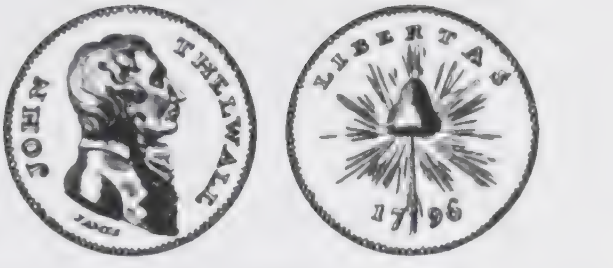
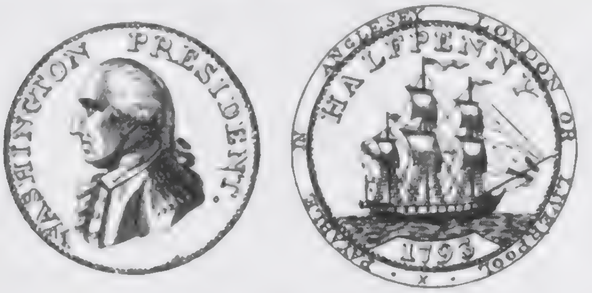
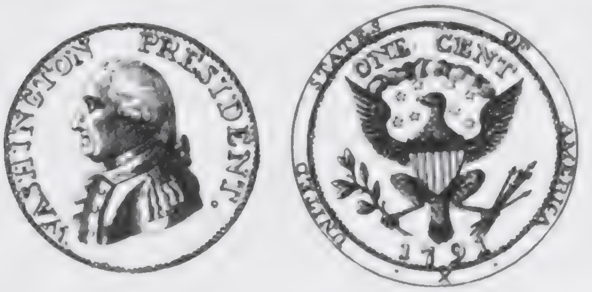
[1] Samuel Smiles, *Lives of Boulton and Watt,* pp. 396-397. Smiles also related that Boulton and Watt had much difficulty with Jean-Pierre Droz, who in France had devised a segmented collar of six parts by which lettering or other devices could be easily applied to the edge of a coin. However, when Droz was hired by Boulton and Watt, he was found to be "of a very troublesome disposition." Further, "Several of his contrivances, being found not to answer, were obliged to be better contrived or completely changed by Mr. Boulton and his assistants" (Smiles, p. 390).


JOHN THELWALL
JAMES
LIBERTAS
1796

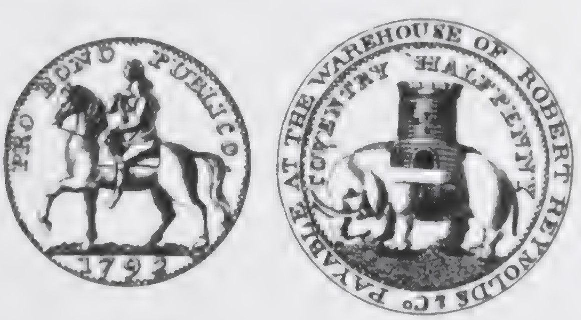
Token of John Thelwall, English radical orator of the 1790s, supporter of Thomas Paine, tried and acquitted of high treason. The reverse shows a liberty cap with rays surrounding, a very early coinage use of a motif that was later employed on coins of Mexico, American Hard Times tokens of the 1830s, a Mint medal and pattern gold dollar of 1836, and a token made in the 1860s by James A. Bolen—among other uses.


WASHINGTON PRESIDENT.
HALFPENNY
1793

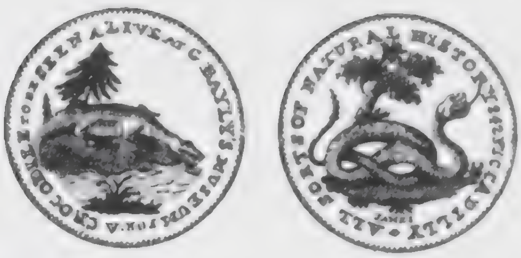
Halfpenny featuring the portrait of George Washington—one of many with his image. The band around the reverse illustrates the lettering used on the edge: PAYABLE IN ANGLESEY LONDON OR LIVERPOOL. In America this is known as the "Washington 1793 Ship Halfpenny."


WASHINGTON PRESIDENT.
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
ONE CENT
1791

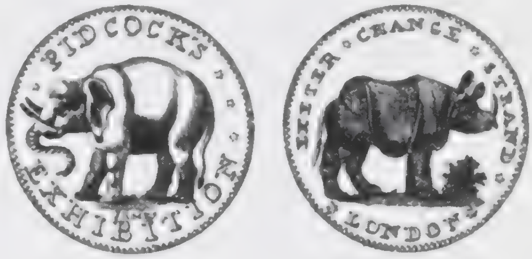
"One cent" piece struck in England but denominated in the decimal system—intended for the American trade. Such pieces were made in large quantities and, it is said, were distributed to members of Congress in an effort to secure a coinage contract in the time before the Philadelphia Mint became a reality. Today this is known as the "Washington 1791 Small Eagle cent."


PRO BONO PUBLICO
1792
PAYABLE AT THE WAREHOUSE OF ROBERT REYNOLDS & Co.
COVENTRY HALFPENNY

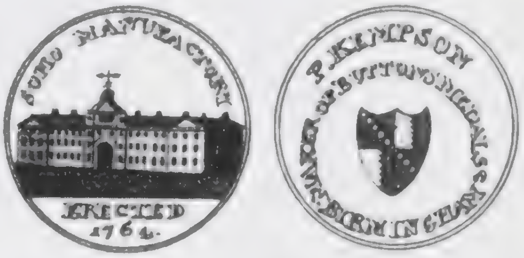
Known as the "Lady Godiva halfpenny," or "Coventry Halfpenny," this popular motif features a lady who is said to have ridden nude on horseback through Coventry in order to secure tax relief for its inhabitants. The legend, "PRO BONO PUBLICO," or "for the public good," alludes to her mission.



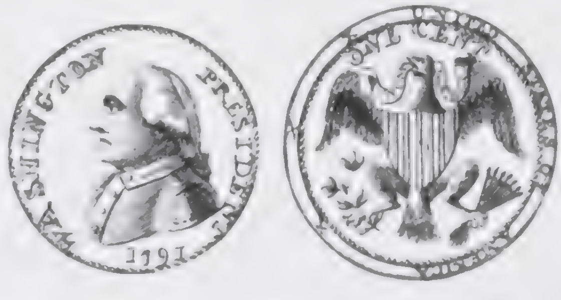
"FOR A CROCODILE TO BE SEEN ALIVE AT C. BAYLY'S MUSEUM / ALL SORT OF NATURAL HISTORY 242 PICCADILLY. This token advertises a London attraction and features a crocodile on the obverse and a rattlesnake (presumably imported from America, as such reptiles are not indigenous to Europe) on the reverse.


PIDCOCKS EXHIBITION
EXETER CHANGE STRAND LONDON

PIDCOCK'S EXHIBITION / EXETER CHANGE STRAND LONDON advertised an exhibition (per *another* token) of "birds and beasts." Shown are an elephant and a rhinoceros, certainly wondrous creatures in England at the time. The exhibition of items from nature—animals, fossils, minerals, exotic plants, and more—was popular on both sides of the Atlantic, and several museums in the United States had similar attractions.

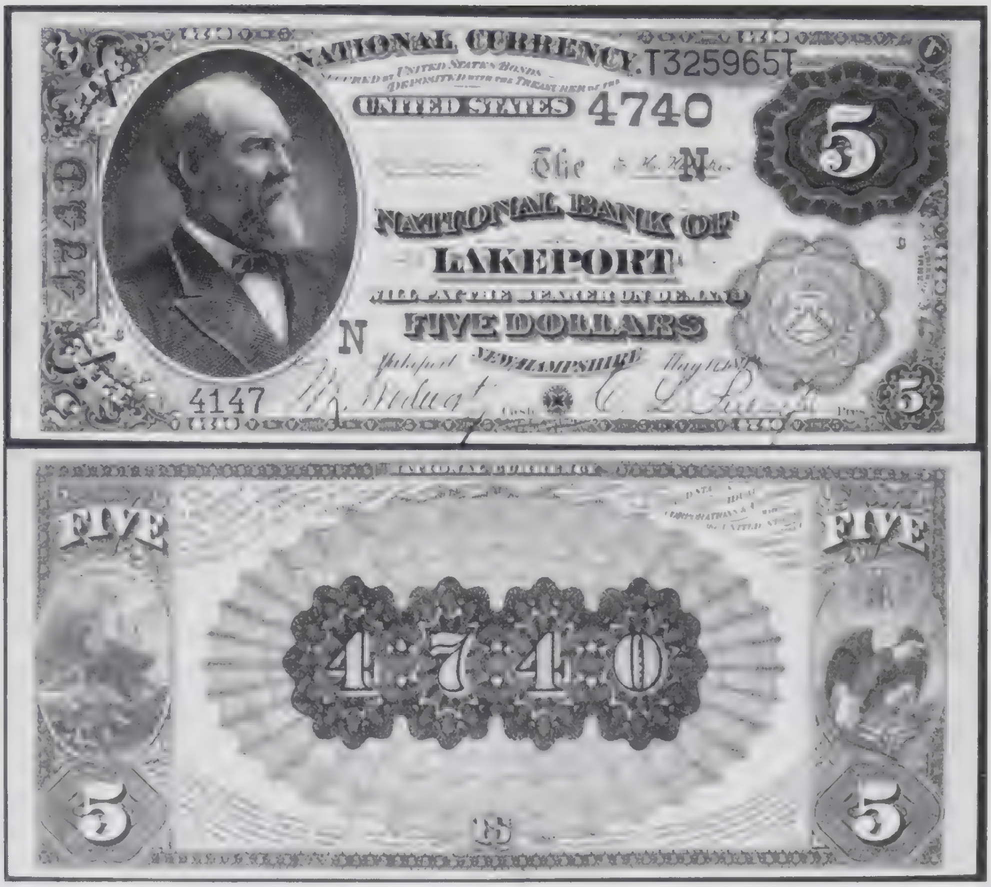

SOHO MANUFACTORY
ERECTED 1764.
P. KEMPSON

Halfpenny combining a die illustrating the Soho Mint, formally known as the Soho Manufactory, with the trade card of P. Kempson, a diecutter active in the 1790s who may have utilized the Soho Mint's equipment.


WASHINGTON PRESIDENT.
1791
ONE CENT

"One cent" piece struck in England but denominated in the decimal system—intended for the American trade. This variety, known as the "Washington 1791 Large Eagle cent," is the companion to the Small Eagle cent shown on this page and is said to have been used for the same purpose—to demonstrate a high-quality coin in anticipation of a federal minting contract.

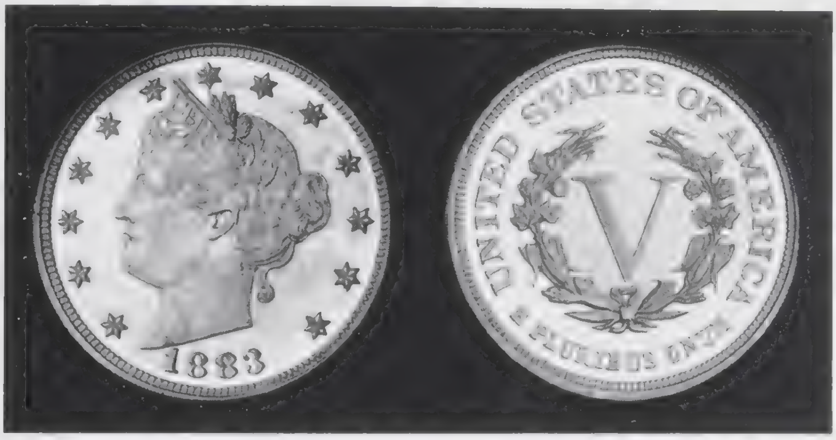
Selected engravings illustrating tokens struck in England during the 1700s, primarily for the numismatic trade. The collecting of such pieces has been popular ever since. (*The Virtuoso's Companion and Coin Collectors Guide,* published by M. Denton, Vol. I to IV, 1795-7)


NATIONAL CURRENCY
T325965T
SECURED BY UNITED STATES BONDS DEPOSITED WITH THE TREASURER OF THE
UNITED STATES
4740
5
The
N
NATIONAL BANK OF
LAKEPORT
WILL PAY THE BEARER ON DEMAND
FIVE DOLLARS
NEW HAMPSHIRE
4147
Cash.
Pres.
FIVE
FIVE
4740
5
5

Lakeport (also known as Lake Village), the scene of the following "adventure," is numismatically important in other ways—such as for National Bank notes. (From the Wayne S. Rich Collection)

ADVENTURE NO. 19

THE FASCINATING 1883 LIBERTY HEAD NICKEL



When released early in 1883, the new Liberty Head nickel created a nationwide sensation. Except for the Roman numeral V there was no indication of denomination. The word "CENTS" was nowhere to be seen. Almost immediately, the story was circulated that the Mint had made a mistake and that these pieces, soon to be recalled, would be of immense value.

In the meantime, certain sharpers gold plated the coins and passed them off as $5 gold pieces. As the following text reveals, the Secret Service was called in to bring such miscreants to justice. Did the coins become rarities? The story is fascinating.

* * *

Numismatic Curiosa

If something is *interesting* to me in numismatics and also has an *element of mystery or discovery,* I become quite excited. Nothing piques my imagination more than a clue that, if followed, might lead to something new. Of course, that is what research is all about.

In the early 1980s Henry G. Spangenberger (Ohio coin, medal, and token dealer who for a time also served as ANA historian) gave me a little pile of old newspapers. Datelined Lake Village, New Hampshire, they were titled *The Curiosity World* and were published by one John M. Hubbard, a name not familiar to me.

Years later in 1994, David Sundman (CEO of Littleton Coin Co.) sent me another copy of the same publication, thinking that I might enjoy it.

The personal connection to me is that Lake Village *was* on Lake Winnipesaukee in New Hampshire, the same lake upon which our company (Bowers and Merena Galleries) has its offices in Wolfeboro, complete with our own boat dock. At the time I was doing research on a project for the Wolfeboro Historical Society, which, since then, has seen print in three volumes, 1,824 pages, titled *The History of Wolfeboro, N.H., 1770-1994.* In the course of several years of doing research for the book, I probably became as familiar with Lake Winnipesaukee as anyone ever has. It was perhaps natural that copies of *Curiosity World,* with the front page spangled with coin illustrations, and printed on the shore of the same lake, would be right up my alley.[1]

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[1] Appreciation is expressed to the following: Remy Bourne (compiler of *American Numismatic Periodicals 1860-1960*), Gilbert S. Center (New Hampshire historian; furnished information concerning Hubbard); Warren D. Huse (curator, Laconia Historical Society; furnished information concerning Hubbard); Laconia Historical Society (photographs); Laconia Public Library (photographs); David Sundman (furnished a copy of *The Curiosity World*); and Henry G. Spangenberger (furnished copies of *The Curiosity World*). Much of this study appeared in the writer's column, "Coins and Collectors," in *The Numismatist* in 1997. In 2000 and 2001 Robert D. Leonard, Jr.,

The Remy Bourne Study

However, I did nothing about investigating *Curiosity World*, except to idly browse through the pages of the several issues on hand, thinking it would provide a good topic for future research a few years down the line.

The future came in the winter of 1996-7 when I decided to dig into a series of books that Minneapolis numismatist-historian Remy Bourne had sent me over a period of time, beginning in 1990. The first one bore the title *American Numismatic Periodicals 1860-1960, Book I*. Within its gilt-stamped blue covers was a detailed study covering all sorts of magazines and newspapers from the 1860s up to 1909 (later publications 1909-1960 were covered in Bourne's *Book II*). Remy Bourne gave the title of each magazine, illustrated the cover of the earliest issue he could find, identified its publisher, editor, and place of business, and delineated year-by-year which volumes and numbers were published, how many pages, in each, etc. Often numismatic research is a labor of love, and this effort certainly was.

Anyway, just past the halfway point in *Book I* there in front of my eyes was illustrated the front page of *The Curiosity World*. A bell rang, a bulb lighted, and I remembered that in my office I had a nice little pile of this same newspaper. Bourne stated that the first issue made its appearance in September 1886, and the last was published on February 15, 1888. Altogether there were 24 issues arranged in two volumes under the imprint of John M. Hubbard, Lake Village, N.H. The editor was identified as H.J. Miron, a name I did not otherwise recognize.

Who was Hubbard? Who was Miron? Why was Lake Village, for a time, a center of numismatic publishing? Where is/was Lake Village? Although it was/is on Lake Winnipesaukee, I didn't recall ever seeing it, and this in spite of my liking to poke around the lake in my boat in the summer. These and other questions ran through my mind.

One of America's most curious and interesting coins, the 1883 Liberty Head nickel, was to play a part in the entire investigation.

The 1883 Liberty Nickel

Having read back issues of the *American Journal of Numismatics* (first published in May 1866), dealer auction catalogues, and *Mason's Coin and Stamp Collectors' Magazine*, among other coin-collecting items of the era, I knew that the decade of the 1880s was one of discovery and excitement. Much of this can be laid on the doorstep of the 1883 Liberty Head nickel, the variety with the word CENTS nowhere on the coin. As is well known to many present readers, the new design of the nickel five-cent piece by Charles E. Barber gave the denomination simply as the large letter V on the reverse. Unscrupulous people gold-plated these new coins, cut reeding into the edges, and passed them off as $5 gold coins (of which more will be related).

The year 1883 began with the standard "Shield" nickel being produced, a style that had been launched in 1866, with a modification in 1867. In the meantime, in 1881 and 1882 several different pattern designs were made for a new nickel. Finally, the Liberty Head motif was decided upon. On January 8, 1883, Col. A. Loudon Snowden, superintendent of the Mint, authorized that the new design be used. Production commenced soon thereafter, and on February 1st the first pieces were placed into circulation.[1]

Numismatists Take Note

In 1883 the *American Journal of Numismatics* was the premier periodical devoted to the coin hobby. The April issue included these mentions of the new coin:

> MINT COINS FOR 1883: At the opening of each year demands are made at the Mint by coin collectors, Numismatic Societies, and others, for Proof coins, or sets representative of a year's coinage. To meet this demand, special coins are struck as is well known, and sold at rates proportional to the extra labor involved. These sets are in gold, silver, nickel and copper. The regular Proof set of gold coins is sold for $43; the silver and minor $4.05, and exclusive of the trade dollar $3.05. The minor coins, embracing the old and new 5-cent coin, the 3-cent piece, and the bronze penny, are sold at 18 cents the set.
>
> The stamping of the new 5-cent coin has increased the interest among collectors, and many requests are made for the set containing the old and new half-dime piece. Large orders have been received from the Northwestern States, Mississippi Valley, and the Pacific Coast, where there are few small coins, for the new 5-cent piece. This demand has been greatly increased by the descriptions of the new coin so widely printed.
>
> The Mint supplies this coin in amounts of $5 each, and the parties to whom the coins are sent pay for the expressage, but if sent in sums of 420, the expressage is paid by the Mint itself. We have noticed boys peddling this new coin along the streets at 20 cents each, the price varying with the demand. Some impressions are found struck from a broken die. It is reported that all of

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furnished copies of Treasury Department and Secret Service reports relating to the events surrounding the 1883 Liberty Head nickel in San Francisco in 1883.

[1] Details from June, 1884, *Mason's Monthly Illustrated Coin Collector's Magazine*, Vol. I., pg. 3.

> this issue are to be recalled by order of Secretary Folger, and the dies altered by adding the word CENTS.

And in the same issue, this:

> As has been mentioned on a previous page, the recent issue of a five-cent nickel is to be recalled, and another one coined with some alterations in the design. According to the best information we have yet received, the principal if not the only change is on the reverse, which is to have the word CENTS inscribed below the numeral of value, V, and the motto E PLURIBUS UNUM is to be placed above instead of below the wreath.

Coins to be Recalled

Soon, the Mint recognized its error, and the word CENTS was added. Meanwhile, over five million of the "error" nickels had been placed into circulation. The interest of numismatists was aroused immediately, especially when the *American Journal of Numismatics* as well as the popular press stated that these pieces were to be recalled. How exciting!

R. Coulton Davis, a Philadelphia pharmacist who collected many series of coins, especially patterns, sent examples to certain friends, including one presented by him to the American Numismatic and Archaeological Society. The receipt of "the first emission of the five-cent nickel" was acknowledged at the Society's May 15th meeting.

As the Mint would be calling them in, the 1883 nickels without CENTS were bound to have great value. Citizens began looking through their pocket change. Among these was young Farran Zerbe, a newsboy in Tyrone, Pennsylvania. Years later, in autumn 1908 upon his re-election as president of the American Numismatic Association, Zerbe recalled:[1]

> You all know of the numismatists' nightmare, the nickels without CENTS. I have a sentimental regard for this all too numerous and troublesome piece. It commanded my interest in our subject. That was in 1883, 25 years ago. So on this, the silver jubilee of my interest in numismatics, I know of no more prized gift to me, than to have been unanimously reelected president of the largest, most effective and progressive numismatic association the world has ever known.

This peculiar variety of 1883 Liberty Head nickel acted as a little salesman for the coin hobby to many others as well. Doubtless, hundreds or even thousands of new faces were attracted to the hobby as a result. This was an early-day equivalent to the ground-swell nationwide jump in numismatic interest beginning in 1999 when the first five varieties were launched in the 50-coin "statehood reverse" Washington quarter series.

How the Deception Worked

The prank of gold plating the new nickels and passing them out as $5 gold coins either spread rapidly or was so obvious that several clever people thought of it at the same time. It was related that in a large eastern city the scheme ran something like this:

A gold-plated nickel, the same diameter as the current federal gold $5 half eagle, would be tendered for the purchase of an item priced from one to five cents, such as a newspaper or a cigar. The clerk, gazing at the "five dollar" coin quickly, put it in the cash drawer and gave the purchaser the appropriate change, $4.95 or a few cents more.

When arrested, the passer of these pieces simply claimed that no statement was made that it was a five-dollar gold piece. The coin was simply given without comment to a clerk, who then *assumed* it was a five-dollar coin.

This caper attracted the attention of various writers, who in time related that a man named Josh was convicted in Boston (or Philadelphia or New York) of exchanging these gilded pieces, giving rise to the saying, "You're joshing me," when someone attempts a minor deception. Never mind that "josh" was already a part of American slang at that time!

Secret Service Operative Finnegas on the Trail

Henry Finnegas, an *operative* (as agents were called) of the Secret Service in San Francisco, filed the following reports, indicating that the nickel game was being played there.[2] As nickel five-cent pieces did not circulate in the West at this time, there was even less chance that someone would recognize such pieces as a nickel.[3]

The first report, February 13, 1883, refers to other coin shenanigans and is quoted for its interest, including mention of a Moffat & Co. $5 gold coin of the type minted in 1849 and 1850:

> S.S. Operative Henry Finnegas.
>
> Report filed on Tuesday, February 13, 1883:
>
> Only this morning I was informed that George Anthony, a well known money broker of this city was arrested by the Police authorities for passing a counter-

---

[1] *The Numismatist*, October-November 1908.

[2] Information furnished by Robert D. Leonard, Jr., from government archives. Slightly edited and adapted.

[3] During the nineteenth century there was no call for one-cent or five-cent pieces for general commerce in California. However, the new 1883 Liberty Head nickel created nationwide attention, and thousands were shipped to the West Coast.

> feit $5 piece. [The victim was] a man named John F. Panty [sp.?].
>
> It appears that last Saturday, Panty changed a $20 piece at Anthony's receiving three $5 pieces and the balance in silver coin. Amongst the latter were two half dollars which had been perforated and then plugged with lead.
>
> Panty went to the brokers on the following Monday to have good coin given to him in place of the [bogus] coins which Anthony refused to do. Panty then went to the office of the Prosecuting Attorney of Police Court No. 2, who imposed a warrant for the arrest of Anthony. He was taken into custody last night and was released upon his depositing $500 for his appearance.
>
> I swore to a complaint before U.S. Commissioner Sawyer and obtained a warrant for the arrest of George W. Anthony for passing a counterfeit $5 piece. I then went to the Police Court, saw the prosecuting attorney. Mr. Coffey had the case against Anthony dismissed. I then arrested him on the Commissioner's warrant.
>
> The two $5 pieces and the two lead-filled half dollars were given to me by Mr. Coffey as evidence against Anthony.
>
> One of the $5 pieces was a genuine U.S. coin the other was a gold coin coined by Moffat in this city in 1850, and although it has been in circulation since that time and bore evidence of hard usage, it weighs exactly the same as the $5 pieces coined at the U.S. Mints at the present time and contains more gold. In 1849 and a few subsequent years $50, $20, $10 and $5 pieces were openly coined and put in circulation in the city.[1]
>
> I took Anthony before U.S. Atty. Hilborn and Asst. U.S. Atty. Van Drifer and laid all the facts in the case before them. I tested and weighed the coin in their presence. Mr. Van Drifer had Commissioner Sawyer dismiss the charge against Anthony as it is not an offence to pass [Moffat] coins and there being no proof that Anthony caused the [half dollars to be filled with lead]. No action was taken on the half dollars. I believe Anthony's business methods were crooked. He will bear watching.
>
> The following are my charges for services rendered and expenses incurred this day.
>
> Incidentals:
> Street car fare: $0.50
> Services $6.00
>
> Ward the office boy was on duty from 9 A.M. until 4 P.M.[2]
>
> Respectfully submitted
> Henry Finnegas
> Operative S.F. District

Now, Finnegas becomes involved with the 1883 nickel situation, this situation being a bit more productive than seeking to prosecute a money dealer for passing a Moffat $5 gold coin:

> San Francisco, April 1, 1883
> Report for Friday, March 30.
>
> Enclosed herewith you will please find a communication from D.M. White including the arrest of a man for attempting to pass a gilded 5¢ nickel (new issue). I called at the City Prison and ascertained that a man named Charles Ferguson about 4 o'clock this P.M. attempted to pass a 5¢ nickel of the new coinage upon a woman of the town for a $5 piece.
>
> I talked with Ferguson who is a notorious rounder.[3] He says a friend gave him the coin. None were found upon him. Ward, the office boy, was on duty from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. The following are my charges for services rendered and expenses incurred this day.
>
> Phaeton fare: $0.25
> Services: $8.00
> Respectfully submitted,
> Henry Finnegas
> Operative S.F. District.
>
> REPORT OF OPERATIONS:
>
> I swore to a complaint before U.S. Commission Sawyer under section 5457, revised statutes, charging Charles Ferguson with attempting to pass a coin in the resemblance and similitude of a $5 piece. Sawyer issued a warrant for his arrest.
>
> I went to Police Court and saw prosecuting Attorney Coffey who asked the Court to send Ferguson over to me, this was done. I then arrested him: took him before Commissioner Sawyer for examination but as he (Sawyer) was otherwise engaged Ferguson was bound over in the sum of $500 to await examination which was set for 10 A.M. on the 2nd of April. I forward you by mail of this date, printed argument and additional points....

Secret Service Operative Finnegas kept busy, and a report filed on Friday, April 7, 1883, told of activities of the preceding week, including this:

> On the 2nd inst. Charles Ferguson was held in the sum of $1,000 by Com. Sawyer to answer the charge of attempting to pass coin in the resemblance and similitude of a $5 piece. He was committed to the above Jail. The coin was a new issue of the 5 cent nickel gilded.

---

[1] Numismatists will chuckle at the Secret Service operative's terminology, "openly coined," etc., giving the implication that counterfeits were being made without regard to prosecution. In fact, circa 1849-1855, many private mints produced coins, including the official United States Assay Office of Gold, authorized by the U.S. Treasury Department (whose branches include the Secret Service). It was the USAOG that made most of the $50 coins mentioned. As will be seen, to his dismay Finnegas learned in court that it was not a crime to pass such private gold coins!

[2] Edward Ward was the office boy (or man, "boy" was the name for the position) for the Secret Service agent, and each month Finnegas paid him a salary of $20. Finnegas also had a $3 monthly allowance for postage.

[3] Habitual drunkard, gambler, miscreant, or the like.

> Ward was on duty from 9 A.M. until 4 P.M. The following are my charges for services rendered. [Invoice for $6 for his services and 20¢ for street car fare].

Finnegas' report of Saturday, April 8, 1883, seems to indicate that more than one person was passing the golden five-cent pieces:

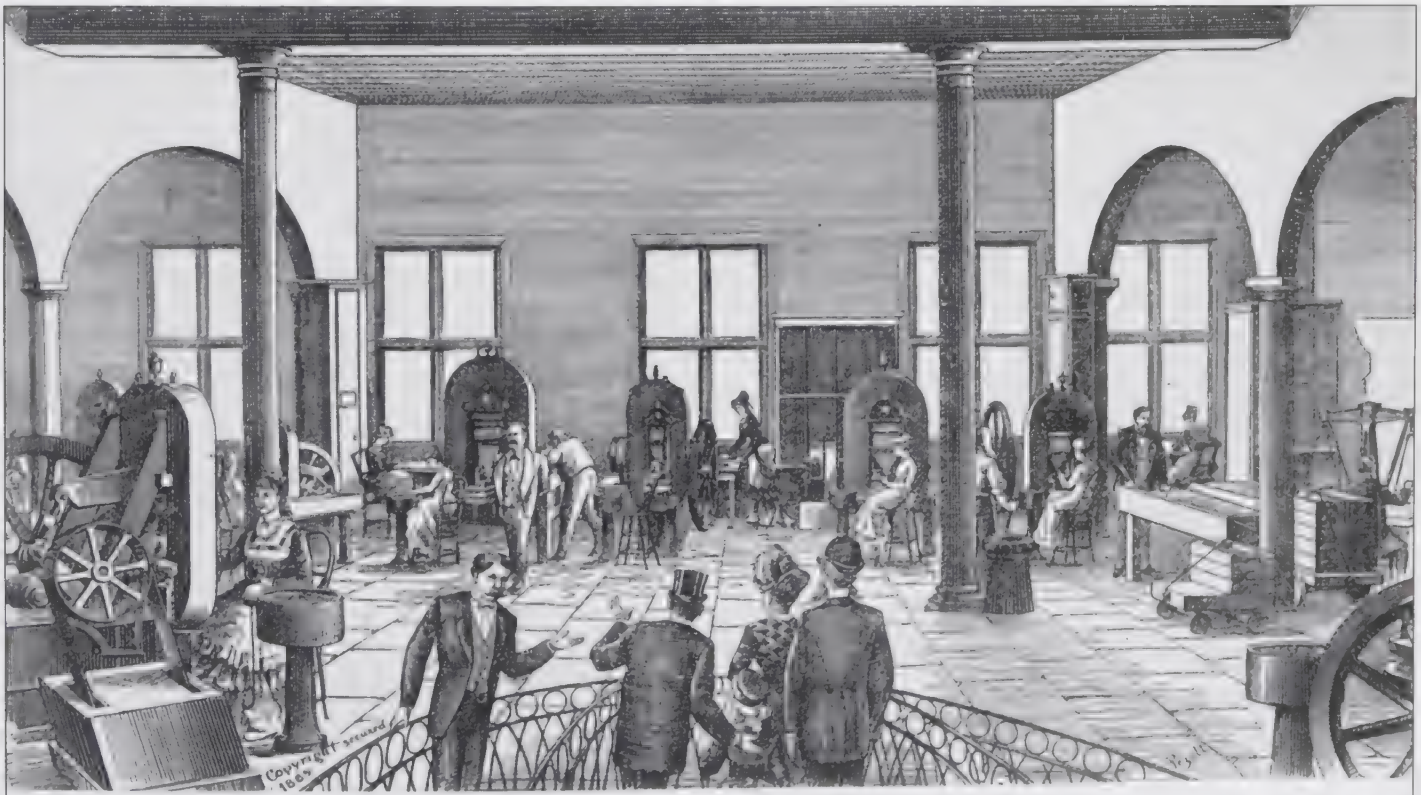
> I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 5¢ nickel concerning what action should be taken in the care of persons who gild the five-cent nickel of the new issue....

Indeed, this was true, as revealed by the same operative's report of April 13:

> Several persons engaged in the gold and silver plating business in this city have called upon me to ascertain if they could gild the new five-cent nickel without my interfering with them. I informed all such that if they gild the nickels they must perforate them or otherwise alter their appearance as to make it impossible for persons being deceived into receiving them for $5 pieces. Ward the office boy was on duty from 9 A.M. until 4 P.M.

Finnegas filed this on Saturday, April 15, 1883:

> Testified as a witness before the U.S. Grand Jury, the bill against Michael Matholi charging him with having in possession four (4) counterfeit standard silver dollars with intent to defraud. Was ignored and he was discharged from custody. There was no proof that he intended to or had passed any.
>
> An indictment was found against Charles Ferguson (alias) combining three counts.
>
> 1st: Charging in possession a counterfeit $5 piece with intent to defraud.
>
> 2nd: With attempting to have a counterfeit $5 piece.
>
> 3rd: With having in possession a coin of metal in the resemblance and similitude of a $5 piece and with attempting to have the same upon one Annie Fisher. The coin referred to as a five-cent nickel new issue gold plated is not his first indictment for this offense. Counsel for Ferguson will attack the indictment.
>
> Twenty-three Grand Jury men full-framed were present, eleven voted to ignore the bill and it took the vote of the foreman to find a bill of indictment. The platers and money brokers here show great interest in the case which is looked upon as a bad one.
>
> I need to be informed.
>
> 1st: As to the act authorizing the coining of the five-cent nickel new issue.
>
> 2nd: Who selected the design for the same and
>
> 3rd: Who approved of the design. The word "Cents" does not appear on the nickel that Ferguson attempted to have for a $5 piece. I am informed that counsel for the accused intended to make a point on this account....
>
> Respectfully submitted
> Henry Finnegas
> Operative S.F. District



Striking coins at the Philadelphia Mint in the 1880s in the era the famous "error" 1883 Liberty Head nickels without CENTS were made. (*Visitors Guide and History of the U.S. Mint, Philadelphia*, A.M. Smith, 1885)

And this account soon thereafter which reveals that the passing of a nickel resulted in a *year in prison at hard labor.* Yes, such things did happen in America:[1]

> Secret Service Operative Finnegas,
> Report filed on Wednesday, April 26, 1883:
>
> In the District Court of the United States for the District of California, April 1883 term Hon. Ogden Hoffman presiding judge.
>
> Charles Furguson, alias Ferguson, was placed upon trial for attempting to pass a coin in the resemblance and similitude of a $5 gold piece. It was a gilded five-cent nickel new issue.
>
> The prosecution was conducted by First Assistant United States Attorney Carroll Cook, Esq., who although a young man has had no superior (if indeed he has had his equal) as first assistant U.S. attorney. The prisoner was defended by R.M. Swain, late assistant prosecuting attorney of Police Court No. 1, San Francisco.
>
> It was proved by the Government that on the 30th of March last, Ferguson attempted to pass a gold plated five-cent nickel for a $5 gold piece upon Annie Fisher a woman of the town.
>
> Defendant's counsel then asked the Judge to instruct the Jury to acquit the prisoner on the following grounds.
>
> 1st that the coin was not a counterfeit.
>
> 2nd that it was not in the resemblance and similitude of a $5 piece.
>
> And 3rd that the coin was made at a mint of the U.S. by authority of the government.
>
> Counsel made a lengthy argument in support of his client. Mr. Cook was about to reply when his honor Judge Hoffman interposed ruling that the piece was a counterfeit coin within the meaning of the statute. That the coin as it left the mint could not be passed as a $5 piece until the gilding was perfected. A nickel as it left the mint was put in evidence.
>
> The case went to the Jury who quickly returned into court with a verdict of guilty. The sentence was one (1) year at hard labor in the State Prison at San Quentin, Cal. and a fine of $1.
>
> Mr. Cook drew the indictment as three (3) counts under section 5457 and 5481 of the Revised Statutes. Ferguson was sentenced under section 5457.
>
> This is the first case of its kind which has occurred in my District. I saw the agent of the Associated Press this morning and at my request he sent telegrams to the press announcing Judge Hoffman's decision that the gilded nickel $5 is a counterfeit coin....
>
> Before leaving this case it is proper to refer to the very able manner in which Mr. Cook handled the case for the government...particularly when he dwelled upon the disastrous effects an acquittal would have upon the community especially small retail dealers and inexperienced persons.
>
> At 3:40 P.M. I sent the following telegram, San Francisco, April 25th 1883, to James J. Brooks, Washington, D.C.:[2] "Ferguson convicted of attempting to pass a gold plated nickel for a five dollar piece. Sentenced one year State Prison."
>
> Respectfully submitted
> Henry Finnegas
> Operative S.F. District

Seemingly, this scenario was replayed in other cities throughout the United States. The 1883 CENTS-less nickel became the problem of the day!

The Complete Collector

Although the 1883 without-CENTS Liberty Head nickel may have been the nemesis of the Secret Service, it created so much attention it was a boon for the numismatic hobby. All of a sudden, coins were in the forefront of the public's interest and imagination.

For collectors the setting was already in place. The Civil War was history (having ended in 1865), silver coins were once again plentiful in circulation (having been withheld by the Treasury Department from 1862 to 1876), and the economy was fairly prosperous. Collecting things was a passion for many, as was history, the latter having been stimulated in 1876 by the Centennial of American Independence. Anyone today with a library of nineteenth-century state, county, and local history books (and I must confess to having more of these than probably any *two* people could ever use!) knows well that more local and regional history books were published in the 1880s than at any other time in the last century.

Collecting coins was already popular, and the *cognoscenti* enjoyed the auction catalogues of W. Elliot Woodward, John W. Haseltine, Edward D. Cogan, and others, and perused the pages of the *American Journal of Numismatics*. However, it was a rare numismatist who enjoyed *only* coins. Typically, those involved in the numismatic hobby also collected autographs, books, stamps, birds' eggs, Indian artifacts, minerals, or one or another specialty or group.

Similarly, rare coin dealers also dealt in such other things as well. The Chapman brothers—S. Hudson and Henry—called themselves "antiquaries." A letterhead of the era advised the Chapmans' clients that they were "Importers of and dealers in ancient Greek and Roman coins, engraved gems, bronzes, pottery, and antiquities, foreign coins and medals; dealers in American coins and medals, and especially of fine and rare specimens, numismatic books, Indian pottery and stone implements, patent cabinet."

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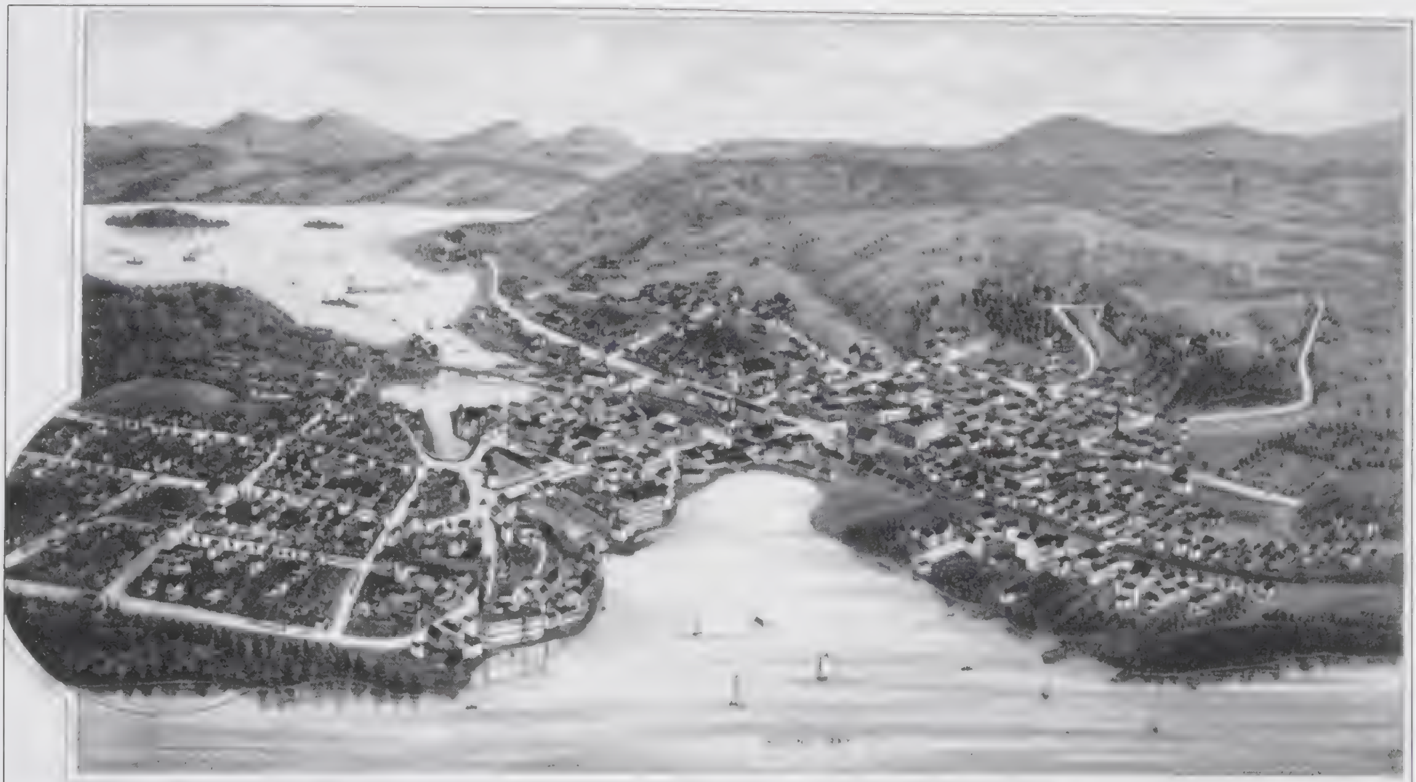
[1] And in England, and in Russia, etc., etc.

[2] Finnegas billed the Treasury $2.20 for sending the telegram.



Panoramic view of Lakeport, New Hampshire, in 1883, where John M. Hubbard held forth with his multiple enterprises, including rare stamps and coins.

In case you wondered, the cabinet in question was patented on April 23, 1872, was made of wood with multiple drawers, came in various sizes, retailed from $28 to $55 depending upon the model, and was said to be ideal for the storage and display of coins and medals.[1]

To be "complete," or *compleat* as Izaak Walton might have had it, a coin collector of the era needed a working knowledge of collectibles in general and history in particular. All of this was a lot of fun. (Today, I have often suggested that numismatists, who are sometimes very narrowly focused, broaden their horizons in the manner that collectors of a century or so ago did.)

Hubbard, the Stamp Collector

Now we return to John M. Hubbard of Lake Village, New Hampshire, where *The Curiosity World* was published in the 1880s. I soon found that the Lake Village of the 1880s is the Lakeport of today, and has been called this since early 1893. So, it hadn't disappeared after all. In fact, I had visited Lakeport many times without knowing that I was at the same time driving down the streets of the erstwhile Lake Village.

Moving to Lake Village from Bristol in the same state, Hubbard secured a position as a clerk in J.R. Leavitt's grocery store on Fore Street, across the street from the Winnipesaukee River, which drains the large lake of the same name. At the time the town was a manufacturing center for many products including machinery, wooden furniture, and cloth goods. Tourism on Lake Winnipesaukee was mostly limited to railroad excursionists boarding steamers such as the *Lady of the Lake* or the *Mount Washington* for cruises among the islands or to other ports such as Alton, Centre Harbor, or Wolfeboro. Then as now, the Lakes Region of New Hampshire was a powerful drawing card in the summer for residents of Boston, Providence, and New York City. In the era before air conditioning, sojourners would often come to spend the entire summer.

The time is 1881, and Hubbard is very much involved in *stamp* collecting, seemingly with a side specialty in coins. On September 1, while still clerking at Leavitt's, he launched a small magazine, the *Granite State Philatelist*, "Granite State" being the nickname for New Hampshire. The masthead proclaimed that the periodical was "Devoted to Stamps, Coins and Curiosities." By this time he was involved in several other businesses as well, including selling shoes.

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[1] *American Journal of Numismatics*, April 1880.

The *Granite State Philatelist,* while it printed occasional items on coins, was primarily devoted to its title subject, stamps. Publication continued through October 1884, by which time three volumes had seen print, comprising 26 issues. Most were of eight-page length, and all measured 5½ by 7½ inches in size. The subscription rate was 15¢ per year for 12 issues, seemingly almost free. The idea was that readers would go shopping in the pages and order items from Hubbard and other advertisers. In addition to those distributed by Hubbard, other copies were sent in bulk to various "agents," such as curiosity shops, who retailed them to customers. Along the way the stamp journal contained occasional items on rare coins, including a feature on the 1883 Liberty Head nickel published shortly after the five-cent piece appeared in circulation.

Although the *Granite State Philatelist* wound down in 1884 (and was sold to Watkins' *Empire State Philatelist*), the flame of Hubbard's collecting interest still burned brightly. An item in the August 17, 1888, issue of the *Belknap Republican,* published in Laconia (a town of which Lakeport became a part of in 1893) noted that Hubbard had been in Boston recently to attend the annual meeting of the American Philatelic Society. During the same era, yet another periodical, *Hubbard's Magazine,* was published in Lake Village and interspersed stamp-collecting features with fiction stories. By this time Hubbard had stopped grocery clerking and had entered the retail business on his own account, selling shoes and "fancy goods." The latter was a catch-all term that often applied to binoculars, lamps, stereoscopes, and other items of home decoration and personal pleasure, but which in this instance probably referred to upscale clothing for men.

During the mid-1880s he also published "Hubbard's Individual Time Book," a small ledger giving days of the week and hours worked, useful for keeping track of labor performed. A series of stamp albums also was issued by him, as were guides on other collecting subjects.

The Curiosity World

In September 1886 *The Curiosity World* made its bow under the ownership of John M. Hubbard and the editorship of H.J. Miron. Printing was apparently done at first by the same person who published the *Lake Village Times,* and who used the type a second time by reprinting Miron's lead article, "The Coins of the United States," for its regular readers. Perhaps some of them became numismatists in due course.

Measuring 13 by 19 inches, *The Curiosity World* was issued on newsprint. The periodical was "devoted to stamps, coins, Indian relics, birds' eggs, autographs, postmarks, tags, etc." The "tags" specialty referred to tin and cardboard tobacco tags (once collected widely, such tags are scarcely heard of today). Miron's lead article on coins, which occupied nearly all of the front page, indicated that *The Curiosity World* had particular editorial emphasis on coins. However, most of the advertisers in the first issue were stamp dealers, probably acquaintances of Hubbard from the past.

In the advertising columns we see E.A. Holton (of Boston), G.B. Calman (of New York City; Calman would later create a stir in the coin trade via the purchase of J.W. Scott's stamp and coin business), L.W. Durbin (Philadelphia), Eastern Stamp Co. (Danvers, Mass.), and Alvah Davison (Helmetta, N.Y.), among others.

In the coin category, W.F. Greany of 827 Brannan Street, San Francisco, was represented as was Charles P. Wilcomb. Located in Lake Village, Wilcomb advertised: "Wanted: Old coins, Indian relics, and anything suitable for Museum or the Cabinet." One might imagine that Wilcomb swiped some of Hubbard's ideas, for in 1887 we find him located with an address of Weirs, N.H. (not far from Lake Village) as publisher of *The Museum Bulletin,* "containing matter of interest to collectors of coins, Indian relics of New England, and specimens of natural history. Subscription, 15 cents per year, 12 nos."[1]

Advertising revenue for *The Curiosity World* was from wherever Hubbard could find it, as reflected by this notice:

"21 NAUGHTY PHOTOS that will sell like hot cakes, sent to agent for 10¢, 42 for 50¢. Try them. Daisy Pub. Co., Cadiz, O." Although there is no way of knowing what the "naughty photos" consisted of, likely as not they were probably illustrations of nude statues.

In the lower right corner of the first page of the first issue, John M. Hubbard commented:

> Probably every one in the United States knows that there are many coins in circulation that are worth much more than their face value, but they wouldn't know them if they should meet them in the middle of the street.
>
> We have issued a Premium Coin List containing 94 illustrations, and giving our buying prices for *every U.S. coin worth over face value.* Every one who handles money should possess a copy. Price 10¢ or three for 25¢, post free, address John M. Hubbard, publisher, Lake Village, N.H.

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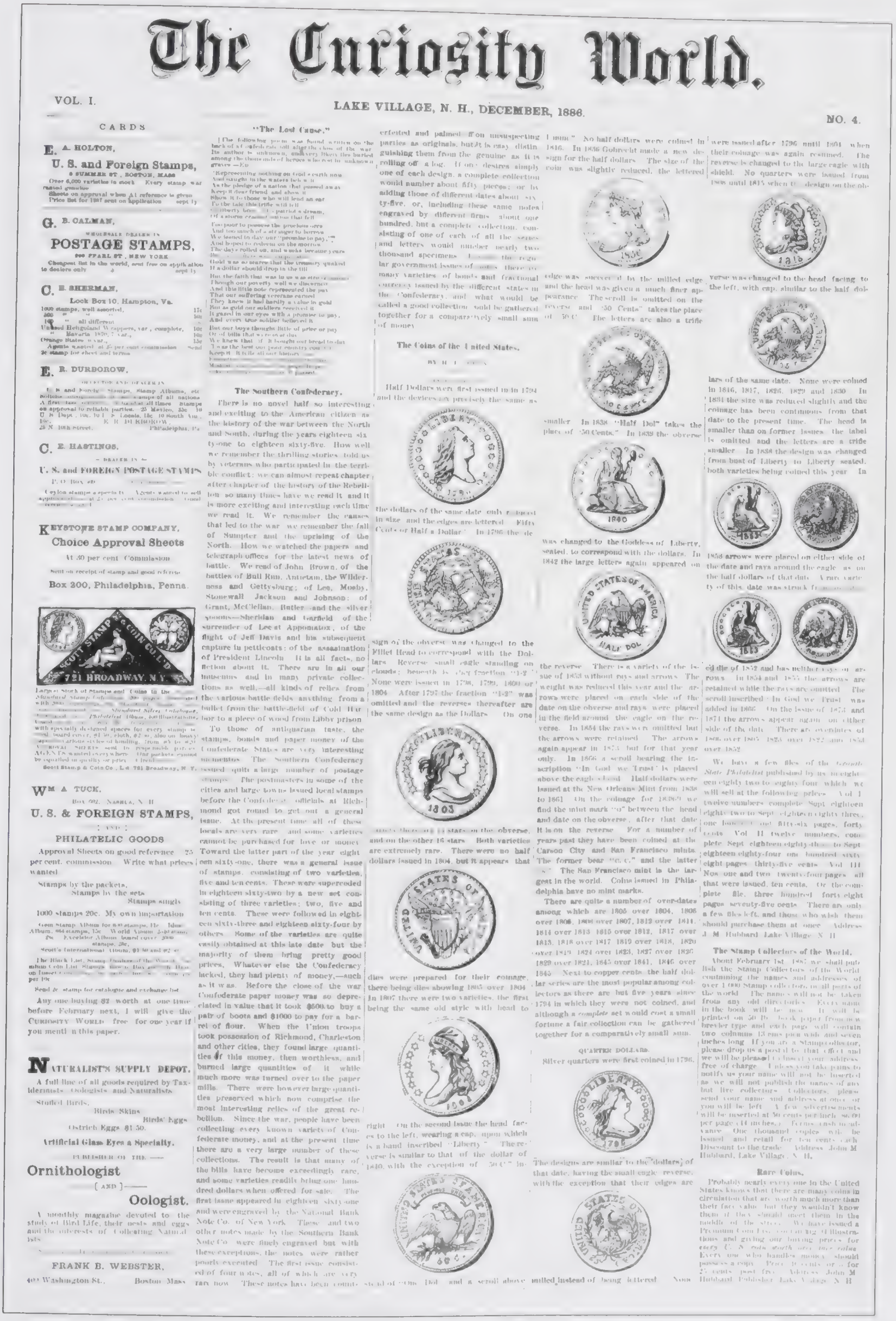
[1] *American Journal of Numismatics,* January 1887.



The Curiosity World.

VOL. I. LAKE VILLAGE, N. H., DECEMBER, 1886. NO. 4.

CARDS

E. A. HOLTON,
U. S. and Foreign Stamps,
9 SUMMER ST., BOSTON, MASS.
Over 6,000 varieties in stock. Every stamp warranted genuine.
Sheets on approval when A1 reference is given.
Price list for 1887 sent on application. sept 1y

G. B. CALMAN,
WHOLESALE DEALER IN
POSTAGE STAMPS,
299 PEARL ST., NEW YORK.
Cheapest list in the world, sent free on application to dealers only. sept 1y

C. H. SHERMAN,
Look Box 10, Hampton, Va.
1000 stamps, well assorted, 17c
500 " " " 16c
100 " all different [illegible]
Unused Heligoland Wrappers, var., complete, 10c
" Bavaria 1870, 7 var., 10c
Orange States, 4 var., 15c
Agents wanted at 25 per cent commission. Send 2c stamp for sheet and terms.

E. R. DURBOROW,
COLLECTOR AND DEALER IN
U. S. and Foreign Stamps, Stamp Albums, etc. Solicits [illegible] stamps of all nations. A first class [illegible] at all times. Stamps on approval to reliable parties. 25 Mexico, 25c. 10 U. S. Dept., 10c. 10 [illegible] Locals, 15c. 10 South Am., 10c. E. R. DURBOROW,
25 N. 10th Street. Philadelphia, Pa.

C. E. HASTINGS,
— DEALER IN —
U. S. and FOREIGN POSTAGE STAMPS.
P. O. Box 49 [illegible]
Ceylon stamps a specialty. Agents wanted to sell approval sheets at 25 per cent commission. [illegible]

KEYSTONE STAMP COMPANY,
Choice Approval Sheets
At 30 per cent. Commission.
Sent on receipt of stamp and good reference.
Box 200, Philadelphia, Penna.

SCOTT STAMP & COIN CO. L'T'D. 721 BROADWAY, N.Y.

Largest Stock of Stamps and Coins in the [illegible] *Standard Stamp Catalogue* [illegible] *Standard Silver Catalogue*, [illegible] *Philatelist Album*, 300 illustrations, [illegible] with specially designed spaces for every stamp [illegible] board cover, $1.50, cloth, $2.50, also on heavy [illegible] various styles of binding, from $5 to $50. [illegible] sent to responsible parties. AGENTS wanted everywhere. Our packets cannot be equalled in quality or price. Circulars [illegible]
Scott Stamp & Coin Co., L'd, 721 Broadway, N. Y.

Wm A. TUCK,
Box 292, Nashua, N. H.
U. S. & FOREIGN STAMPS,
: AND :
PHILATELIC GOODS
Approval Sheets on good reference. 25 per cent. commission. Write what prices wanted.
Stamps by the packets,
Stamps by the sets
Stamps single.
1000 stamps 20c. My own importation.
Gem Stamp Album for 800 stamps, 11c. Ideal Album, 864 stamps, 15c. World Album 2,400 stamps, 25c. Excelsior Album board cover 3000 stamps, 28c.
Scott's International Album, $1.50 and $2.50.
The Black List, Stamp Dealers of the World [illegible] Coin List [illegible] per 10c.
Send 2c. stamp for catalogue and exchange list.
Any one buying $2 worth at one time before February next, I will give the CURIOSITY WORLD free for one year if you mention this paper.

NATURALIST'S SUPPLY DEPOT.
A full line of all goods required by Taxidermists, Oologists and Naturalists.
Stuffed Birds,
Birds Skins
Birds' Eggs
Ostrich Eggs $1.50.
Artificial Glass Eyes a Specialty.
PUBLISHER OF THE
Ornithologist
[AND]
Oologist.
A monthly magazine devoted to the study of Bird Life, their nests and eggs and the interests of Collecting Naturalists.
[illegible]
FRANK B. WEBSTER,
409 Washington St., Boston, Mass.

"The Lost Cause."

[The following poem was found written on the back of a Confederate bill after the close of the war. Its author is unknown, and very likely lies buried among the thousands of heroes who rest in unknown graves.—ED.]

Representing nothing on God's earth now
And naught in the waters below it
As the pledge of a nation that passed away
Keep it dear friend, and show it.
Show it to those who will lend an ear
To the tale this trifle will tell
Of liberty born of the patriot's dream,
Of a storm-cradled nation that fell.

Too poor to possess the precious ores
And too much of a stranger to borrow
We issued to-day our "promise to pay,"
And hoped to redeem on the morrow.
The days rolled on, and weeks became years
But our coffers were empty still;
Gold was so scarce that the treasury quaked
If a dollar should drop in the till.

But the faith that was in us was strong indeed
Though our poverty well we discerned
And this little note represented the pay
That our suffering veterans earned.
They knew it had hardly a value in gold
But as gold our soldiers received it
It gazed in our eyes with a promise to pay,
And every true soldier believed it.

But our boys thought little of price or pay
Or of bills that were overdue
We knew that if it bought our bread to-day
'Twas the best our poor country could do.
Keep it. It tells all our history [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

The Southern Confederacy.

There is no novel half so interesting and exciting to the American citizen as the history of the war between the North and South, during the years eighteen sixty-one to eighteen sixty-five. How well we remember the thrilling stories told us by veterans who participated in the terrible conflict; we can almost repeat chapter after chapter of the history of the Rebellion so many times have we read it and it is more exciting and interesting each time we read it. We remember the causes that led to the war, we remember the fall of Sumpter and the uprising of the North. How we watched the papers and telegraph offices for the latest news of battle. We read of John Brown, of the battles of Bull Run, Antietam, the Wilderness and Gettysburg; of Lee, Mosby, Stonewall Jackson and Johnson; of Grant, McClellan, Butler and the silver spoons—Sheridan and Garfield; of the surrender of Lee at Appomatox, of the flight of Jeff Davis and his subsequent capture in petticoats; of the assassination of President Lincoln. It is all facts, no fiction about it. There are in all our museums and in many private collections as well,—all kinds of relics from the various battle fields anything from a bullet from the battle-field of Cold Harbor to a piece of wood from Libby prison.

To those of antiquarian taste, the stamps, bonds and paper money of the Confederate States are very interesting mementos. The Southern Confederacy issued quite a large number of postage stamps. The postmasters in some of the cities and large towns issued local stamps before the Confederate officials at Richmond got round to get out a general issue. At the present time all of these locals are very rare and some varieties cannot be purchased for love or money. Toward the latter part of the year eighteen sixty-one, there was a general issue of stamps, consisting of two varieties, five and ten cents. These were superceded in eighteen sixty-two by a new set consisting of three varieties; two, five and ten cents. These were followed in eighteen sixty-three and eighteen sixty-four by others. Some of the varieties are quite easily obtained at this late date but the majority of them bring pretty good prices. Whatever else the Confederacy lacked, they had plenty of money,—such as it was. Before the close of the war Confederate paper money was so depreciated in value that it took $500 to buy a pair of boots and $1000 to pay for a barrel of flour. When the Union troops took possession of Richmond, Charleston and other cities, they found large quantities of this money, then worthless, and burned large quantities of it while much more was turned over to the paper mills. There were however large quantities preserved which now comprise the most interesting relics of the great rebellion. Since the war, people have been collecting every known variety of Confederate money, and at the present time there are a very large number of these collections. The result is that many of the bills have become exceedingly rare, and some varieties readily bring one hundred dollars when offered for sale. The first issue appeared in eighteen sixty-one and were engraved by the National Bank Note Co. of New York. These and two other notes made by the Southern Bank Note Co. were finely engraved but with these exceptions, the notes were rather poorly executed. The first issue consisted of four notes, all of which are very rare now. These notes have been counterfeited and palmed off on unsuspecting parties as originals, but it is easy distinguishing them from the genuine as it is rolling off a log. If one desires simply one of each design, a complete collection would number about fifty pieces; or by adding those of different dates about sixty-five, or, including these same notes engraved by different firms about one hundred, but a complete collection, consisting of one of each of all the series and letters would number nearly two thousand specimens. [illegible] the regular government issues of notes there are many varieties of bonds and fractional currency issued by the different states in the Confederacy, and what would be called a good collection could be gathered together for a comparatively small sum of money.

The Coins of the United States.

BY [illegible]

Half Dollars were first issued in in 1794 and the devices are precisely the same as the dollars of the same date only reduced in size and the edges are lettered "Fifty Cents or Half a Dollar." In 1796 the design of the obverse was changed to the Fillet Head to correspond with the Dollars. Reverse small eagle standing on clouds; beneath is the fraction "1-2." None were issued in 1798, 1799, 1800 or 1804. After 1797 the fraction "1-2" was omitted and the reverses thereafter are the same design as the Dollars. On one variety there are 13 stars on the obverse, and on the other 16 stars. Both varieties are extremely rare. There were no half dollars issued in 1804, but it appears that dies were prepared for their coinage, there being dies showing 1805 over 1804. In 1807 there were two varieties, the first being the same old style with head to right. On the second issue the head faces to the left, wearing a cap, upon which is a band inscribed "Liberty." The reverse is similar to that of the dollar of 1840, with the exception of "50 C." instead of "One Dol." and a scroll above "[illegible]." No half dollars were coined in 1816. In 1836 Gobrecht made a new design for the half dollars. The size of the coin was slightly reduced, the lettered edge was succeeded by the milled edge and the head was given a much finer appearance. The scroll is omitted on the reverse and "50 Cents" takes the place of "50 C." The letters are also a trifle smaller. In 1838 "Half Dol" takes the place of "50 Cents." In 1839 the obverse was changed to the Goddess of Liberty, seated, to correspond with the dollars. In 1842 the large letters again appeared on the reverse. There is a variety of the issue of 1853 without rays and arrows. The weight was reduced this year and the arrows were placed on each side of the date on the obverse and rays were placed in the field around the eagle on the reverse. In 1854 the rays were omitted but the arrows were retained. The arrows again appear in 1873 but for that year only. In 1866 a scroll bearing the inscription "In God we Trust" is placed above the eagle's head. Half dollars were issued at the New Orleans Mint from 1838 to 1861. On the coinage for 1839-[illegible] we find the mint mark "o" between the head and date on the obverse, after that date it is on the reverse. For a number of years past they have been coined at the Carson City and San Francisco mints. The former bear "c. c." and the latter "s." The San Francisco mint is the largest in the world. Coins issued in Philadelphia have no mint marks.

There are quite a number of over-dates among which are 1805 over 1804, 1806 over 1805, 1808 over 1807, 1812 over 1811, 1814 over 1813, 1815 over 1812, 1817 over 1813, 1818 over 1817, 1819 over 1818, 1820 over 1819, 1824 over 1823, 1827 over 1826, 1829 over 1821, 1845 over 1841, 1846 over 1845. Next to copper cents the half dollar series are the most popular among collectors as there are but five years since 1794 in which they were not coined, and although a *complete* set would cost a small fortune a fair collection can be gathered together for a comparatively small sum.

QUARTER DOLLARS.

Silver quarters were first coined in 1796. The designs are similar to the dollars of that date, having the small eagle reverse, with the exception that their edges are milled instead of being lettered. None were issued after 1796 until 1804 when their coinage was again resumed. The reverse is changed to the large eagle with shield. No quarters were issued from 1808 until 1815 when the design on the obverse was changed to the head facing to the left, with cap, similar to the half dollars of the same date. None were coined in 1816, 1817, 1826, 1829 and 1830. In 1831 the size was reduced slightly and the coinage has been continuous from that date to the present time. The head is smaller than on former issues, the label is omitted and the letters are a trifle smaller. In 1838 the design was changed from bust of Liberty to Liberty seated, both varieties being coined this year. In 1853 arrows were placed on either side of the date and rays around the eagle as on the half dollars of that date. A rare variety of this date was struck from the old die of 1852 and has neither rays or arrows. In 1854 and 1855 the arrows are retained while the rays are omitted. The scroll inscribed "In God we Trust" was added in 1866. On the issue of 1873 and 1874 the arrows appear again on either side of the date. There are overdates of 1806 over 1805, 1825 over 1822 and [illegible] over 1852.

We have a few files of the *Granite State Philatelist* published by us in eighteen eighty two to eighty four which we will sell at the following prices. Vol. I twelve numbers complete Sept eighteen eighty two to Sept. eighteen eighty three, one hundred and fifty-six pages, forty cents. Vol. II twelve numbers, complete Sept eighteen eighty-three to Sept eighteen eighty-four one hundred sixty eight pages thirty-five cents. Vol. III Nos one and two twenty-four pages all that were issued, ten cents. Or the complete file, three hundred forty eight pages seventy-five cents. There are only a few files left, and those who wish them should purchase them at once. Address J. M. Hubbard, Lake Village, N. H.

The Stamp Collectors of the World.

About February 1st 1887 we shall publish the Stamp Collectors of the World containing the names and addresses of over 1,000 Stamp collectors in all parts of the world. The names will not be taken from any old directories. Every name in the book will be new. It will be printed on 50 lb. book paper from new brevier type and each page will contain two columns 13 ems pica wide and seven inches long. If you are a Stamp collector, please drop us a postal to that effect and we will be pleased to insert your address free of charge. Unless you take pains to notify us your name will not be inserted as we will not publish the names of any but live collectors. Collectors, please send your name and address at once or you will be left. A few advertisements will be inserted at 50 cents per inch, $6.00 per page (14 inches.) Terms cash in advance. One thousand copies will be issued and retail for ten cents each. Discount to the trade. Address John M. Hubbard, Lake Village, N. H.

Rare Coins.

Probably nearly every one in the United States knows that there are many coins in circulation that are worth much more than their face value but they wouldn't know them if they should meet them in the middle of the street. We have issued a Premium Coin List containing [illegible] illustrations and giving our buying prices for *every U. S. coin worth over face value*. Every one who handles money should possess a copy. Price [illegible] cents or 2 for 25 cents post free. Address John M. Hubbard, Publisher, Lake Village, N. H.

Front page of *The Curiosity World*, issue No. 4, December 1886. (Courtesy of Michael R. Bourne)

Not one to do things half way, with seeming bravado Hubbard announced that "the October issue of *The Curiosity World* will be 5,000 copies," followed by 2,500 in November (the reason for the diminution was not given), then back up to 5,000 in December. The subscription rate was 25¢ per year, with free sample copies available singly to potential readers. Advertising was solicited at the rate of 10¢ per line for four insertions, $1 per inch for one insertion, and $3 per inch for four insertions.

Miron's Coin Article

In the pantheon of numismatic luminaries the name of H.J. Miron is not to be found. He penned a very nice article for the first issue of *The Curiosity World*, and continued his output in further installments through 1887. However, by March 1888, when the first issue of Volume III appeared (in new, reduced 6 by 9½ inch size), he was no longer editor. Perhaps he made his fortune in the stamp business, in which by 1886 he was already recognized (per advertising) as the "well-known author and producer of 'Stamps, How to Buy and Sell,'" which sold for 10¢ per copy.

Meanwhile in a numismatic vein, in Volume I, Issue No. 1, Miron started at the top in the American series, which he proposed to study by denominations. Leading off was a bare-bones discussion of $20 gold coins illustrated by a couple of cuts borrowed from J.W. Scott's *Standard Catalogue, Gold & Silver Coins*. The article concluded with this comment: "The coinage of double eagles has been continuous since 1849 until the present time, and since 1850 the issue has been quite plentiful, but as the face value is $720, full sets are seldom met with."

The preceding comment is interesting on a couple of accounts. First, it reflects the predilection for collecting by *date*, without regard to mintmarks. In fact, branch mints aren't even mentioned. The reader of the account had no clue that there was such a thing as an 1856-O, 1870-CC, or other mintmarked rarity. The face value of $720 is a total of one piece for each year from 1849 onward. In all of numismatics in 1886, not a single person collected double eagles by mintmark sequence. Those few people that were interested in the denomination collected by date, as noted, and typically desired Proofs.

In his discussion of $5 gold pieces, Miron noted: "Half eagles of 1814 are rare and also of the following year, 1815, there being but five specimens extant; 1818 is rare; 1819, very rare; 1820 and 1821, very scarce; 1822, there are only two specimens, one of which is in the Mint Cabinet at Philadelphia; 1823, rare; 1824, very scarce; 1825, rare; 1826 and 1827, very rare; 1828 and 1829, *excessively rare;* 1830 to 1833, inclusive, rare; 1834, first issue, extremely rare. The later issues are quite common."

I've always been amused at the "excessively rare" term, which has survived and is sometimes seen in catalogues today. To me, "excessively rare" means *too* rare, or rarer than it should be.

Gold coins of the $3 denomination are described, but nothing is said about aspects of scarcity or rarity. The various denominations, with exception of the aforementioned $5 pieces, were a recitation of design changes and authorized coinage acts, with no collecting information added.

Pages two and three of Issue No. 1 were primarily devoted to stamps, including a brief biography of E.A. Holton, of Boston, president of the New England Philatelic Union. No laggard he, Holton was described as having "had as many as five establishments in Boston and New York at the same time."

On page three are found these numismatic advertising notices from Hubbard, tucked in at the end of the other material: "Confederate Money: Since the downfall of the Southern Confederacy, Confederate money has been growing more valuable each year, and anyone desiring a few specimens should procure them at once. We have a small stock of Confederate bills, which we are selling at 10¢ each, or three varieties for 25¢."

Then followed this:

> California gold: California gold bangles are all the rage, now, for pins, bracelets and rings. We have just received a large stock direct from San Francisco, Cal., and can furnish them at the following prices: quar dol size 28 cents; half dol size 56 cents, either round or octagon, post free.

Presumably these were jewelry-type tokens rather than what are called today "small denomination California gold coins," but who can tell?

The last page of Issue No. 1 was devoted to a variety of featurettes including the story of an old piano in Lynn, Massachusetts; a balloon ascent in Belgium; the story of a young man who engaged in a mail-order romance and who sent a picture of a handsome lad instead of his homely self; a joke played on Post Office employees; dress of the Seminole Indians; and "Trapping a Dude," the latter telling "how a plucky and fun-loving lady avenged a masher's advances." Clearly, if anything the first issue of *The Curiosity World* was diverse!

The Second Issue

The October 1886 number of *The Curiosity World*, Volume I, Issue No. 2, continued with H.J. Miron's "The coins of the United States" article, which discussed silver dollars from 1794 through 1804, with a fairly lengthy commentary on the last named rarity. Sharing the front page was another article by Miron, "Birds, Eggs, Nests."

In the advertising department, subscribers were now told that "exchange notices not exceeding thirty words will be inserted for subscribers only, free of charge." Among the advertisers, the Scott Stamp & Coin Company, Limited, 721 Broadway, made an appearance, and invited orders for its *Standard Copper Catalogue* for 25¢ and its *Standard Silver Catalog* for a similar price. Readers today will still recognize the Scott name, best known in stamps, but not unknown in coins; one of the few dealers' names surviving in recognition value from the nineteenth century.

On page two of the October issue appeared a profile of L.W. Durbin. Among the information is this item related to coins:

> In 1869 Mr. Durbin moved to Philadelphia, PA, purchased an interest in the firm of Mason & Company, stamp and coin dealers, but the year following withdrew from the firm and established himself in the stamp business on his own hook, continued in business until the present day.

Unsaid, but probably true, was that working with Mason would have been a trial in its own right, as Mason was one of that breed of individuals who felt that he had been dealt a bad hand in life, that others were continually taking unfair advantage of him, and that the recognition that he so richly deserved for his brilliant accomplishments was not forthcoming.

Hubbard advertised for sale a variety of publications, scarce stamps, and other items, including a "black list," which was said to contain the "names and addresses of a large number of deadbeat dealers and collectors in all parts of the world." The price was 10¢ each. I wonder if a copy survives today?

Capturing the prevailing fad of the era, an illustration was given of the 1883 Liberty Head nickel, accompanied by this copy:

> The government has been calling in the V nickels of 1883 without CENTS, ever since their coinage was stopped. They are melted and coined into the common nickels.
>
> We have a few of the variety without cents, like the above cuts, which we are willing to sell at 15¢ each. Every one who does not have a specimen should procure one at once as in a short time they will cost much more.
>
> John M. Hubbard, Lake Village, NH.

Success seemed to have been knocking at Hubbard's door, for he announced that "The proprietors just purchased a new $500 printing office—which is pretty good evidence that the *World* has come to stay—and will hereafter publish the paper himself instead of having the work done in an out of town office."

Further, "The editorial department is under the management of the well-known author Mr. H.J. Miron, and Mr. L.W. Durbin is in charge of the department of new issues, assisted by an able corps of the best writers in the United States and Europe."

Popularity Causes a Rerun

Issue No. 3 of *The Curiosity World* appeared in November 1886, apparently on schedule. "Owing to our large editions for September and October being exhausted, we have been asked to reprint that part of 'The History of U.S. Coins' which appeared in those numbers." Thereupon there appeared a very condensed version of the earlier article on gold coins, this time with the reverse of the 1854 $3 illustrated in error upside down. Certainly this rehash of what had just been published could not have been pleasing to the regular subscribers.

In addition to coin information, which continued to dominate the front page, Hubbard now offered for the sum of 10¢ a book, "Hints on Insect Collecting." Was there no limit to this man's versatility?

In the advertising columns appeared a notice for *The American Numismatist*, published by C.E. Leal, 149 Ellison St., Paterson, N.J. "A large illustrated monthly magazine published in the interest of coin and bill collectors."

Another notice stated that "Dollars can be made by watching the columns of the *Exchange and Mart*, a paper for buyers, sellers and exchangers: containing articles on the rare coins of America by E.L. Mason," and published at 17 Congress St., Boston. In New York City, George E. Fownes, 134 Park Road, offered a selection of modern medals for sale.

On the back page a feature on the trade dollar, the continuation by H.J. Miron of his coin series, gave an interesting description of the obverse design: "A giantess representing the Goddess of Liberty looking toward the observer's left, is seated on a bale of cotton. A sheaf of wheat also seems to assist in supporting her. Her left hand grasps a scroll inscribed LIBERTY. The right hand holds an olive branch which she is apparently offering someone."

Further: "Trade dollars were coined from 1873-1884 inclusive. From 1879-1884 they were issued with collector's Proof sets and not coined for general circulation."[1] Then followed a *poem* about the trade dollar submitted by E. Locke Mason, Jr., who seems to have been an acquaintance of Hubbard.

By this time the 1883 Liberty Head nickel had become a stock-in-trade item for Mason, who had been promoting them for a long time. As an example, the August 1884 issue of *Mason's Monthly Illustrated Coin Collector's Magazine* made this offer:

> We are in receipt of a few of these now rapidly disappearing nickel five-cent pieces, and can fill a few orders at $7 per hundred, or 10 cents each. Proofs 20 cents each.

From "Earthquake Sand" to Glass Eyes

The December 1886 issue, No. 4, continued H.J. Miron's article, "The Coins of the United States," treating the series of half dollars and quarters. "Next to copper cents, the half dollar series are the most popular among collectors as there are but five years since 1794 in which they were not coined [1798, 1799, 1800, 1816, and, presumably, 1804], and although a *complete* set would cost a small fortune, a fair collection could be gathered together for a comparatively small sum." Miron discussed various overdates in the series, some of which are not known to exist today, these mystery pieces being 1824/3 (which may be what we today call "1824/various dates"), 1845/1 and 1846/5 (the latter is recognized by Walter Breen in his *Encyclopedia*, 1988, but not widely accepted elsewhere).

On the front page, Hubbard noted that he was at work on still another publication: "About February 1, 1887, we shall publish the *Stamp Collectors of the World*, containing the names and addresses of over 1,000 stamp collectors in all parts of the world. The names will not be taken from any old directories. Every name in the book will be new."

This must have been a rather curious directory if it did not list standard, recognized authorities. Woe to the user who was confronted only with newcomers to the hobby!

At this time, Hubbard also became a coin auctioneer, presenting on page 3 his "Auction Sale" of 119 lots, of which the first 28 were coins, the last lot being a gold plated 1883 Liberty Head nickel.

Among other advertisers, P.J. Ballaguer of Charleston, S.C., offered "earthquake sand" for sale, and Frank B. Webster of Boston noted: "Artificial glass eyes a specialty." W.H. Steadman of Mifflinburg, PA., noted that his stock in trade was Fractional Currency which was "bought, sold, and exchanged." Fractional Currency had been popular in collecting circles since spring 1876, when the Treasury Department began paying out large quantities of silver coins to redeem the small paper notes. Within two years, only a few remained in circulation in larger towns and cities.

Onward

Among the news in issue No. 5, in January 1887, was the announcement that "F.A. Thomas, of Mexico, N.Y., is about to publish *Common Sense*, a monthly paper devoted to stamps, coins, and curiosities." Perhaps feeling a threat, however slight, the next paragraph reassured readers of *Curiosity World* by stating: "We guarantee to give more reading *in six months* than the average philatelic paper gives in one year."

Among other intelligence, it was reported that Charles London of Saccrappa, Maine, found a French silver coin of 1786 lodged in a horse's hoof, not exactly where a numismatist might think of looking.

The February 1887 issue, No. 6, continued Miron's serial discussion of United States coins, concluding with two-cent pieces. The number of outside advertisements does not seem to have increased much if at all, and one suspects that revenue was not flowing in at the rate that Hubbard expected.

Jumping ahead (by necessity, as No. 7 is not in my library) to April 1887, issue No. 8 is found to feature one-cent pieces and to note:

> Copper cents are collected by more people than any other coin, one reason being that a fair collection can be collected together for a comparably small amount of money, then there is but one year in which none were coined, and there are so many varieties that they make a very interesting study, or it takes a microscope, backed by a good eye, to discover some of the very minute varieties, yet this makes it all the more interesting. A complete set of

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[1] This is an interesting early mention of the existence of the 1884-dated trade dollar. Coins of this date and also of 1885 were not generally known until years later, circa 1907-8, when 10 specimens of 1884 and five of 1885 were said to have been obtained from the estate of William K. Idler, old-time Philadelphia coin dealer. The distributors of the 1884 and 1885 trade dollars in 1907-8 were John W. Haseltine (Idler's son-in-law) and his business associate, Stephen K. Nagy.

copper cents in good condition would cost quite a fortune. A few years ago at an auction sale 88 copper cents brought $1,295.

Then came Flying Eagle and Indian cents, with a notation that "the nickel cent of 1856 is the only rare date of the small cents." By 1887, the rarity of certain issues we consider elusive today had not yet been recognized—1877 being an example.[1]

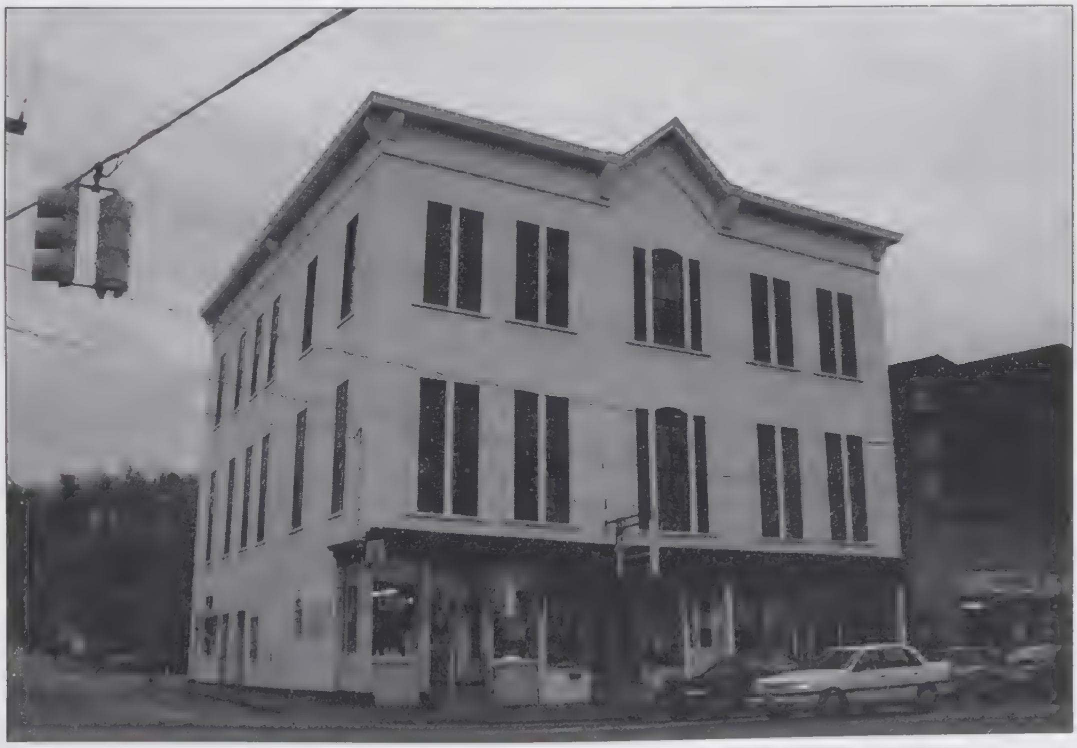
The journal went on to publish 16 more issues, before throwing in the proverbial towel in February 1888. Later issues must have been distributed in very small quantities—nothing like the 2,500 to 5,000 copies proclaimed for the earlier numbers in the series. Today, later issues are sufficiently rare that I have never encountered them.

Hubbard in Later Life

After *The Curiosity World* ceased publication, Hubbard continued to devote his attention to what must have been his first love and launched a publication titled *The Stamp World*, a monthly devoted to the title subject, obviously inspired by a similarly named periodical that had been published elsewhere (including by a Harvard student) and had expired in 1887. Actually, *The Stamp World* was a continuation of *The Curiosity World*, simply reflecting that Hubbard had not found rare coins to be as remunerative as he had hoped, and decided to concentrate on stamps.

Meanwhile, Hubbard remained involved on the local merchandising scene. In Lake Village (later called Lakeport, the name still used today, a district of Laconia), he was in the printing and shoe retailing trade, certainly an unusual combination. He had musical talent as well and composed *Canney's March* and *Governor Quinby's March*, the latter in 1909 (Gov. Quinby lived in Lakeport).

In 1891, Hubbard was located at Moore's Opera Block, Lake Village. Above his ground-floor store at the lower left of this large three-story building was a sign: JOHN M. HUBBARD / BOOTS, SHOES & RUBBERS, while other, lower signs noted that coffee, cool soda, cigars, daily newspapers, ice cream, and confectionery items could be purchased within his store. His neighbor on the right, also in the Opera Block, was a drug store. In the same building were also the offices of Drs. Moore and Roby and the grocery store of E.L. Cram. On the floors above were facilities for presenting stage shows, presumably the likes of traveling vaudeville troupes, musical performances, melodramas, etc., in the genre of *East Lynne, Lady Audley's Secret, Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and the like. Every town with self-respect had its own "opera house" back then, but few *operas* (in the classic sense) were ever presented.



View of Hubbard's building, the old Moore Opera Block, as it appeared many years later on Union Avenue, Lakeport. (Photograph by the author in May 2000).

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[1] Of course, *rarity* is only relative to the number of collectors seeking a piece. The 1877 cent is rare in the context of the Indian cent series in which it is a highly prized key date, but on an absolute basis there are thousands of specimens extant.

An advertisement in the *Belknap Republican*, January 30, 1891, notes Hubbard's specialty in shoes and "also, gentlemen's furnishing goods" (men's clothing and accessories). Featured was Beal's Safety Railroad Shoe, $2.50 per pair, made in Brockton, Massachusetts, and designed to prevent the wearer's foot from becoming caught in switches, guard rails, mechanisms, etc. The sad experience of Arthur Varney was given. An employee of the Boston & Maine Railroad, Varney had "caught his foot in a guard rail…and before it could be extricated he was knocked down by a moving freight train, which passed over his body.… He leaves a wife and two children. If this man had worn a pair of the Beal's Safety Railroad Shoes he would not have lost his life for his foot could have been instantly withdrawn."

Apparently, selling shoes was quite profitable in addition to saving the lives of trainmen. Eventually, Hubbard became the owner of a large shoe manufacturing firm and, circa 1899, is said to have moved to Rochester, N.H. He was in the right place at the right time, for the manufacture of footwear was in its ascendancy in New Hampshire (and would remain a vital industry for the next half century, until it was destroyed by a flood of low-price imports). I have encountered no mention of Hubbard in twentieth-century numismatic accounts. Thus, it is probable that if he collected coins further, he did it quietly.

The Later Story

What happened to the 1883 Liberty Head nickels? The story that the Mint would recall them prompted just about everyone to look for specimens, with the result that millions were saved—probably a generous proportion of the entire production. The result was that in later years, the 1883 without CENTS nickel was recognized as the single most common date in the nineteenth-century nickel five-cent piece series, despite many dates having substantially higher mintages.

There were so many such coins in the hands of collectors and dealers they had virtually no premium value 40 years later. In April 1929, Henry Chapman, billing himself as "America's Leading Numismatic Dealer," offered for sale such pieces, "Very Good to Fine" grade, for six cents apiece!

Time vindicates most numismatic purchase decisions, and it turned out that the 1883 nickel was no exception. In the 1930s, when coin collecting became one of America's most popular hobbies—spurred on by the publication of Wayte Raymond's *Standard Catalogue of United States Coins* (1934) and his "National" coin albums, the price of the coin rose. And continued to rise. Today, a lightly worn piece is worth a few dollars, and a gem Mint State coin commands a three-figure price. Hubbard was right. They were worth buying. But the profits went to the grandchildren of those who bought such coins from dealers for 15¢ each in the 1880s.

ADVENTURE NO. 20

THE FANTASTIC 1804 DOLLAR

The silver dollar of 1804, America's most storied numismatic rarity. More columns of print have been devoted to this issue than to any other single rare coin. The adjective fantastic was once used as part of the title of a book on this coin. (Walter H. Childs Collection, 1999)

* * *

Tradition and Fame

My *Adventures with Rare Coins* book, published in 1979, included a chapter which told all about the famous 1913 Liberty Head nickel rarity. Now, it seems appropriate to include a chapter on another rarity, the 1804 dollar—never mind that in 1999 I wrote a *book* about this particular coin, *The Rare Silver Dollars Dated 1804 and the Exciting Adventures of Edmund Roberts*, which became the second book-length study of this numismatic landmark, following *The Fantastic 1804 Dollar* by Eric P. Newman and Kenneth E. Bressett, 1962.

This particular rarity has stirred up a lot of attention for a long time, and no doubt will continue to do so. Even before these two books were created, more about the 1804 dollar had appeared in print in newspapers, magazines, and catalogues than for any other rarity.

In his offering of the William Forrester Dunham Collection in June 1941, B. Max Mehl, then standing at the top of the numismatic auction world, showcased the 1804 dollar, the feature of this, his most important sale ever:

> *In all the history of numismatics of the entire world, there is not today and there never has been a single coin which was and is the subject of so much romance, interest, comment, and upon which so much has been written and so much talked about and discussed as the United States silver dollar of 1804.*
>
> *While there may be coins of greater rarity (based upon the number of specimens known), none is so famous as the dollar of 1804! This is due to the fact that this great coin was the first coin of United States mintage to have been recognized as the rarest coin of the United States, from the very beginning of American numismatics, more than one hundred years ago. And it is today, as it always has been, the best known and most sought-after coin, not only among collectors, but among the public in general as well.*

In 1998 the Walter H. Childs Collection was consigned to Bowers and Merena Galleries for public auction sale (an event which took place in 1999). Included was the gem of gems, the highest-quality specimen of all known 1804 dollars, an "original" dating from circa 1834 and possibly the identical piece presented by diplomatic envoy Edmund Roberts to the Sultan of Muscat. The present "adventure" memorializes much of what happened and provides a rare personal view of a nineteenth-century numismatist about whom little had reached print earlier. To me, often the stories concerning the owners of coins can be just as fascinating as the coins themselves.

The stage was set for a memorable event, the offering of a truly remarkable specimen of what was described in the aforementioned Newman—Bressett book, *The Fantastic 1804 Dollar.* And, fantastic it is!

The following words, by Chris Karstedt, tell what happened when the coin was sold, in August 1999:

On the *Today* Show

Monday Morning August 30th

As we arrived in the ballroom at the Park Lane Hotel very early on the morning of August 30th, you could feel something incredible was about to happen this day.[1]

It was too early for lot viewing to start. The time was just before 7 A.M. Dave Bowers was about to make an appearance on the NBC *Today* show. Security was in place and off we went to the television studio in a private limousine sent by NBC. In a matter of minutes we arrived at Rockefeller Center, where the show is filmed, with a large audience outside of the plate glass window of the studio.

After our arrival, we waited in the Green Room (so marked; a term borrowed from the stage, as every theatre has its green room where the actors get ready). Refreshments and snacks were provided. Dave nibbled on a piece of brie cheese and had a few grapes, I had some orange juice, and Ray Merena had some coffee.

Dave was led off by an assistant, and returned a few minutes later with powder on his face and with other added cosmetic touches to prevent glare on the camera. Before we knew it, we were called to the set. The interviewer was NBC's Ann Curry, who, as it turned out from the get-acquainted comments before air time, found coins to be quite interesting. Also, she and the other staffers were quite intrigued to learn that Dave, as a teenager in 1957, had appeared on the *Today* show with Dave Garroway. "What was Garroway like?" she asked. Dave recalled that he was quite informal, a nice fellow.[2]

The interview itself was fabulous, as Ann Curry was quite excited about *The Coin*, the 1804 silver dollar that was resting in its own display on a nearby easel. Several minutes later, the cameras stopped, and Dave took off his microphone and started to leave.

Wait a minute! Ann Curry asked Dave to walk over to another set, and with Ann and her co-host Matt Lauer, they filmed another interview, this one answering such questions as "What makes a coin valuable?" While the first interview was aired all over the nation, the second came at the half-hour station break and was shown only in certain areas. A few hours later, Steve Bobbitt, publicity director for the American Numismatic Association—who saw both segments on his screen in Colorado—called to thank Dave for mentioning the Association in his second segment. As the interview ended, Matt Lauer asked, "Will you come back again?"[3]

Getting Ready for the Sale

Upon our return to the Park Lane Hotel, the Bowers and Merena team was on deck with four licensed auctioneers including John Babalis, Ray Merena, Chris Karstedt, and Dave Bowers. Pat Merena, Ray's wife, supervised bidder registration. Financial officer Barbara Clifford tended to credit requests and inquiries. Taking care of bids, computer tracking, last-minute questions, and helping in any other way possible were Cynthia LaCarbonara, Donna Badeau, and Donna Pearo. Auction Director John Pack was keeping an eye on proceedings. Meanwhile, back home in New Hampshire, many other staffers were connected by telephone and computer to the auction site.

A stack of messages from assorted news agencies from around the world was waiting for me [Chris Karstedt], as publicity director for Bowers and Merena. I settled into the exciting job at hand, returned calls, started preparations for a nonstop series of television and radio interviews, and answered numerous speculative questions on what the evening would bring!

Throughout the day CNN, CBS, ABC, NBC (again), Fox, and Reuters were there—with worldwide coverage in the offing! Even a crew from *Tokyo Today* was on hand to film a half-hour show on the auction and 1804 dollar to be presented on the far side of the world. Meanwhile, in the background Donn Pearlman, well-known numismatist, author, and general good fellow, was serving as media consultant for Bowers and Merena, escorting reporters with notepads, camera crews, and more.

The lot viewing room was packed for the rest of the day as dozens of buyers viewed the incredible array of coins about to be sold, including in its own special holder and display case, *The Coin*, the finest known 1804 dollar in existence—the center of attention and interest of all in attendance.

The Fireworks Begin!

As the evening session opened, the back left corner of the room was filled with video cameras, still

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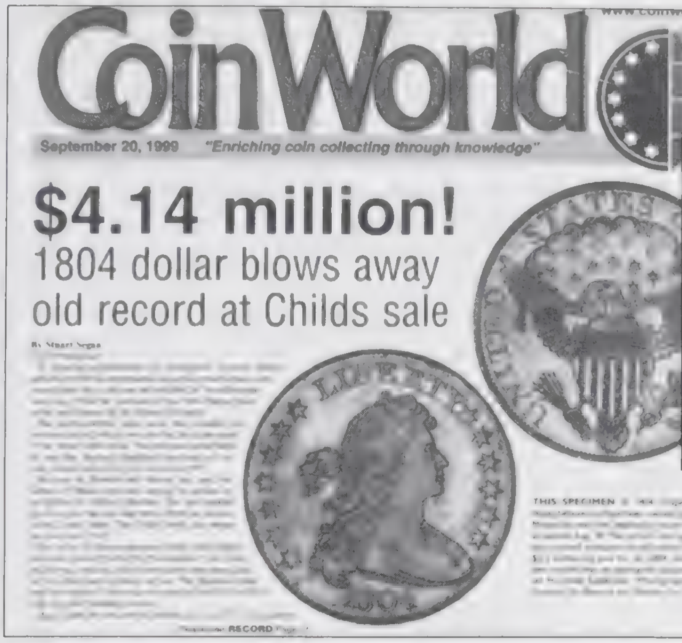
[1] Excerpted and adapted from a story in the *Rare Coin Review*, "World Record Price Shattered!" • Footnotes are later, are by QDB, and were added in connection with the present text.

[2] See related commentary under Adventure No. 5 in the present text.

[3] As it turned out, I was back on the *Today Show* a couple of times within the year, in connection with the gold treasure from the *S.S. Central America* and, separately, an interesting error coin combining the obverse of a Washington quarter with the reverse of a 2000 Sacagawea dollar.



CoinWorld

www.coinworld.com

September 20, 1999 "Enriching coin collecting through knowledge"

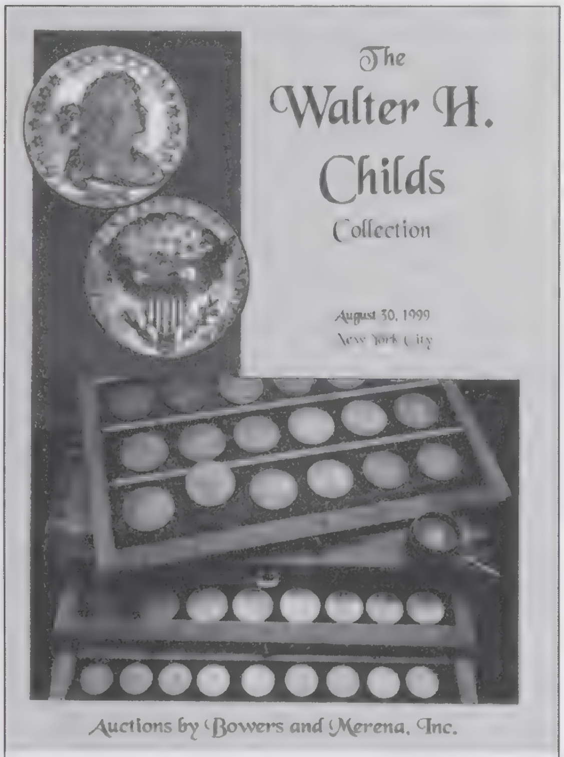
$4.14 million!

1804 dollar blows away old record at Childs sale

THIS SPECIMEN

RECORD

A newsworthy event. Scenes from the Bowers and Merena auction of the Walter H. Childs Collection, specifically the night the Childs specimen of the 1804 silver dollar was sold for a record-breaking $4.14 million. Above right: A packed auction room awaits the big moment. Right: Dave Bowers congratulates David Akers, the winning bidder. Below right: Christine Karstedt interviews David Akers while Dave Bowers looks on.

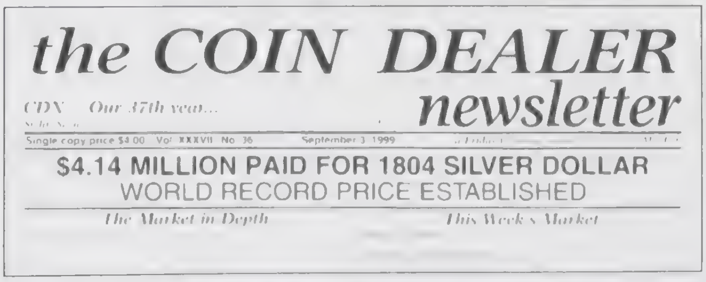


The
Walter H.
Childs
Collection

August 30, 1999
New York City

Auctions by Bowers and Merena, Inc.

The cover of the Walter H. Childs Collection catalogue showing coins in the wooden cabinet drawers in which they were stored for more than a century. Offered in 1999, the Childs Collection drew worldwide media coverage and intense bidder participation, establishing many all-time price records, including over $4 million for the 1804 dollar—more than twice the price any other coin had ever realized.



the COIN DEALER newsletter

CDN Our 37th year...

Single copy price $4.00 Vol XXXVII No 36 September 3 1999

$4.14 MILLION PAID FOR 1804 SILVER DOLLAR

WORLD RECORD PRICE ESTABLISHED

The Market in Depth

This Week's Market

cameras, a live Internet connection with Collectors Universe, and all the reporters to go along with them! It was standing room only as a veritable *Who's Who in Numismatics*—and then some—were in attendance. Even a special observer was near the front row: Fuad Mubarak Al-Hinai, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Representative of the Sultanate of Oman (formerly Muscat) to the United Nations. *The Coin*, whose pedigree had been traced with certainty back to C.A. Watters, a British collector who owned it in the late nineteenth century, is considered by Dave Bowers as a possibility for being the same piece presented to the Sultan of Muscat in 1835.

First to be sold in the evening session were United States half dollars, most of which had been collected by Walter H. Childs in the period 1870-1906, and which were completely new to the present generation of collectors. Then came silver dollars, heralded by the first year of issue, 1794, and then, a few lots later, *The Coin*.

Dave Bowers at the auctioneer's lectern scanned the sea of faces as a hush fell over the crowd. A few introductory remarks were made and then the lot was opened at $500,000. In a split second the million-dollar mark was left behind, as an excited bidder yelled "One point two million!" with over 20 hands in the air! History was being made!

But…this was just the beginning. Scott Travers, representing a private client, immediately shouted "One million, seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars!" With the 15% buyer's fee added, this represented a bid of just over $2 million, and a new price record had been set! Excitement prevailed as the bids kept going—and going—and going at $100,000 increments!

Jay Parrino of his firm, "The Mint," was on hand with his family and had high hopes. And by all expectations, with his hand in the air at $2.1 million, continuing onward, he had a great chance. Not far away in the packed room was Michael Fey, a silver dollar specialist, who was imitating the Statue of Liberty—arm high in the air. And, in another part of the room, a long-time Southwest collector, who has been active for many years including participation in the Bowers and Merena offering of the gold coin part of the Eliasberg Collection way back in 1982, had his hand held aloft—all of this on the high side of the $2 million mark! Nothing like it had ever been seen before!

Meanwhile, on the center aisle David W. Akers, representing the father-and-son team of Mack and Brent Pogue, was keeping an eye on proceedings, just waiting for the right moment to jump into the action. As the seconds clicked by and the cameras whirred, anticipation rose to a frenzy— "Two point three million," called Dave Bowers, then "two point four million." When would the hammer fall?

"Two point nine million!" "Three million!" Did anyone ever think they'd ever see the day we crossed this threshold? And yet there was more!

"Three point one million!"

And now there were only two hands still in the action. Jay Parrino faced off against David Akers and the Pogues as the bids continued to soar.

"Three point five million," as Dave Bowers looked at Jay Parrino and recognized his remarkable bid. There was a brief moment when the crowd thought this certainly must be it!

The auctioneer then looked to David Akers inquiring "Three point six million?" and after but a moment's hesitation, Akers, realizing that this was truly a once in a lifetime opportunity—a rendezvous with destiny—raised his hand again.

"Three point six million!" the auctioneer cried.

"Going once!"

"Going twice!"

"Sold for three point six million dollars!"

Applause rang out, a standing ovation greeted the buyer, and camera crews rushed the elated dealer as he spoke on behalf of his clients. Quick calculations were done to add the buyer's fee, and the price stood at $4,140,000—more than TWICE the old world's record!

The two-million dollar and three-million dollar ranges in the coin hobby existed as price records only for a matter of seconds!

Now, in one minute and forty-six seconds of history, the "King of United States Coins" was more kingly than ever!

When all was said and done, after the 1804 dollar and a thousand other coins had been sold, the total realization was over $9.4 million. Excitement prevailed from beginning to end, and enthusiasm was the order of the day.

The next morning newspapers carried the remarkable headline on the coin that brought $4.14 million. We understand from dealer friend Ron Gillio that he had never seen such coverage, especially in the Far East. Having just returned from an overseas business trip, Ron called to congratulate us and let us know we made the papers and television in Hong Kong, Nepal, the Philippines, Bangkok, plus other places we've only seen on the map. Certainly all of us here will remember that fine evening for decades to come!

The Story of the Childs Collection

Actually, the story began in Brattleboro, Vermont, 129 years earlier in 1870, when Walter H. Childs, who worked for the Estey Organ Company (later becoming the world-famous firm's treasurer), developed an interest in numismatics. He bought from many sources, including John W. Haseltine in Philadelphia and J.W. Scott in New York City. Beginning later in the decade, he ordered Proof coins each year from the Philadelphia Mint, including Indian cents, Shield and Liberty nickels, Liberty Seated and Barber silver coins, Morgan dollars, and gold coins—the latter including dollars, quarter eagles, $3 pieces, and $5 coins. Each piece was carefully preserved and treasured in a specially made felt-lined wooden cabinet.

Sliding a drawer from the cabinet, Childs could view row after row of his coins as he worked toward the impressive goal of acquiring one of each date from the 1790s onward. In those times, collecting by mintmarks was not popular, and most numismatists did not care if a given coin had a "CC" (Carson City), "S" (San Francisco), or other mintmark. Similarly, sometimes a gold coin would have a "C" or "D" for Charlotte or Dahlonega, and sometimes not. Little did Walter Childs dream during this lifetime that his heirs would, by chance, have some of the most prized mintmark coins in existence!

In other instances, by chance a coin did not have a mintmark. Childs could have acquired an 1863-S quarter eagle, which is a scarce coin. However, he obtained a Philadelphia Mint coin, a gem Proof, one of only 30 coins made at Philadelphia that year!

Other coins, from half cents to silver dollars were gathered one by one. After Walter Childs' passing in 1906, his collection descended to his son, C.F. Childs, who in time formed C.F. Childs & Co., which by the 1930s and 1940s was the most important dealer in America of United States government bonds. Headquartered in Chicago, the firm achieved worldwide renown.

In 1945, C.F. Childs had the opportunity to acquire the coin of coins, the rarity of rarities. Virgil Brand's specimen of the 1804 silver dollar was available through the Brand heirs. The coin was acquired by Chicago dealers Ruth and Charles Green, and offered to Childs and also to Baltimore collector Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr., both of whom dearly wanted the coin. Childs had first chance, accepted the opportunity, and on October 1, 1945 became the owner. (The following year, Eliasberg was able to outbid everyone else and acquire another coin, the Stickney-Atwater coin, this being the same coin that Bowers and Merena sold in 1997 for a then-record of $1.8 million!)

In time, the collection descended to the family of C.F. Childs II, who in 1998 consigned it to Bowers and Merena Galleries. Kenneth E. Bressett and his son, Phil Bressett, had been unofficial curators of the Childs Collection, assisted with the transaction and also helped gather the history of the collection. At the sale in New York City, the C.F. Childs II family was on hand to watch the proceedings as were Ken and Phil Bressett.

An appreciation and a remembrance of, collector and his cabinet were contributed by C.F. Childs II and numismatic consultant Kenneth E. Bressett and were included in the catalogue. To me the narratives added a great deal to the pedigree and personality of the coins offered, this being true, of course, of other collections formed by interesting individuals:

An Appreciation of Walter H. Childs

By C.F. Childs

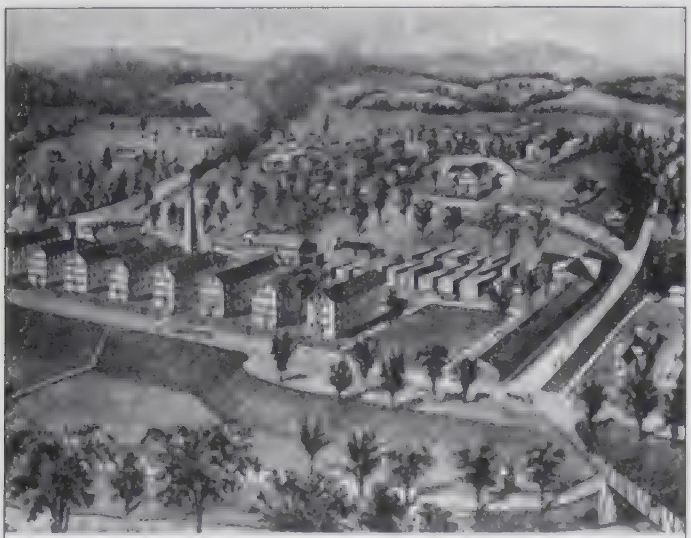
Early Life in Vermont

With the decision to sell the Walter Henry Childs Collection of American coins came the need to sort and read many documents, letters, news clippings, and review old photographs that had languished in boxes for almost a century. These documents allowed me to set the facts against distant remembrances and develop an accurate sense of who he was and what he accomplished. I hope the following account of his life recreates a sense of his personality and the environment in which this collection was assembled so many years ago.

Walter Henry Childs was born on August 5, 1852 in Wilmington, Vermont. His family was prominent in the small town of Wilmington which lies between Bennington and Brattleboro on what is now Route 9 running across the southern border of the state. His grandfather was Major Jonathon Childs, a sixth generation American who fought with Colonel William Williams' regiment of The Green Mountain Boys at the battles of Bunker Hill, Saratoga, and Bennington. His grandfather was Major Adnah Bangs Childs who founded one of the first stores in Wilmington, a wheelwright shop, and was postmaster for 27 years. He also founded the local savings bank. Adnah's first child (of 12) by his wife Hannah Lamb was John Murdoch Childs born at Wilmington April 16, 1827.

The Estey Organ Co.

John and his wife Martha Winchester raised two sons before John's sudden death from appendicitis July 2, 1869 at the age of 42. His widow Martha moved that same year to Brattleboro with her two young sons. In this larger town 20 miles to the east, Walter, then 16 years old found employment at the Estey Organ Co., a manufacturer of reed organs founded in 1846. Having left his schooling behind with the move to Brattleboro, and with obligations to help support his mother and nine-year-old brother, Walter must have faced his new environment with trepidation. To further complicate his sense of vulnerability, a flood severely damaged the Estey factory soon after he was hired. He managed, however, to build on the adversities of this year of dislocation and gain the confidence of General Jacob Estey, president and owner of the company. Estey was by all accounts a talented, practical man who had weathered many storms in taking control of the fledgling organ manufacturer in 1863 and rebuilding it when it burned down in 1864. Hav-



The Estey Organ Works in Brattleboro, Vermont, was described as being "the largest of its kind on the globe." It was here that Walter H. Childs served as treasurer of the firm and began his coin collection in 1870.

ing bought out early partners, he was in full control by the time young Walter appeared at the shop door.

What Jacob Estey came to appreciate in his intern was a willingness and ability to learn, and very methodical approach to problems. And problems there were! A patent infringement suit initiated by two founders of the original company dragged on for years threatening the survival of Estey. Walter, as a junior bookkeeper, had to deal with the daily devastation the protracted suit had on the finances of the company. Apparently, he also learned how to beg and borrow to maintain cash flow. These hectic, precarious times at Estey propelled Walter into the position of head accountant and bookkeeper (or chief financial officer) by his early twenties. He remained in that position for the remainder of his working career with the organ maker, which totaled 36 years.

What the Estey plant provided for young Walter was the facility to engage his inventiveness. In the three decades after his arrival, Estey Organ Co. grew from a single building to a row of buildings covering $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres with 500 workers producing 1,800 organs a month. He was exposed daily to such men as Levi Fuller, an electrical and mechanical engineer, ten years his senior who, as a partner and son-in-law of Jacob Estey, supervised the development of the modernized facilities and patented improvements to the expanded line or organs. In his later years, Fuller was elected governor of Vermont.

Walter Childs, Weather Forecaster

In the small town of Brattleboro, the facilities of the Estey Co. provided a place where anyone scientifically inquisitive could find an education and nurturing. At this site, Walter was able to witness and participate in the electrical revolution as steam engines and gas lighting became electric motors and electric lights. His two consuming avocations, meteorology and telephony, were most likely fostered in the scientifically charged environment of the Estey shop, but his "vivacious, independent, methodical nature" (as it read in one of his obituaries) came to Brattleboro with him.

Walter developed a boyhood passion for recording and forecasting the weather. While in the early stages of establishing his family in Brattleboro, learning accounting, and courting Clara Maria Davis, a local high school girl, he built a weather station on the summit of Mt. Wantastiquet on the New Hampshire side of the Connecticut River, the eastern boundary of town. The structure was of wood with a large enough wind direction dial to be read with binoculars from the Brattleboro side. On top was an anemometer for determining wind speed that was read by telegraphic relays to his house in town. Eventually, the wind direction also could be read at home.

For over 30 years and with the enlistment of friends who became enthusiastic toward this venture, Walter recorded precipitation and wind, delivering data to local newspapers and making forecasts. Encouraging a high energy group of friends, Walter led the effort to build a 20-foot-wide carriage road to the summit of Mt. Wantastiquet. Completed in 1891, the two-mile road was the ultimate test for horse and carriage, but certainly availed him easier access to the weather station. At his death in 1906, a granite monument with bronze plaque inscribed to his memory was erected by friends on the site of the weather station.

The Telephone

On October 18, 1877, Walter and his uncle Frederick W. Childs (though an uncle, only three years older than his nephew) heard a demonstration of the telephone. Now at the age of 25, and married to Clara Davis, and the father of a two year old son, Walter became smitten with the possibilities of the telephone. In 1878, the first phone line in Brattleboro was stretched between his house and that of H.B. Chamberlain, owner of a hat and suit store, who often helped record the meteorological instruments. By 1880, a line was stretched 20 miles west to Wilmington, bringing instant emergency communication and a way for Walter to speak with his relatives. My grandfather reminisced about riding in a horse drawn sleigh after big snowstorms to watch his father splice the broken line.

In 1881, Walter and his uncle Fred organized the Brattleboro Telephone Exchange and were among the first licensees of the fledgling Bell Telephone Company. At the time, the idea of a switchboard exchange was unique. It gradually grew to over 200 customers with lines over much of Windham County and connections to Bellows Falls, Vermont, and Greenfield, Massachusetts.

The receivers were handmade of wood. In correspondence with John J. Robinson, President of the New England Telephone Co. in 1944, my grandfather remembered his father Walter turning the headsets on a wood lathe at home. Indeed, in a company history of New England Telephone written in 1919 by then president Matt B. Jones there is mention of "the wooden receivers all unique made by Mr. Childs for his exchange licensed in the small town on Brattleboro."

Jones offered the opinion that Childs had the receivers milled in the cabinet shop of the Estey Organ Co. as an economy measure. He mentioned one of the phones in the company's collection uses a tintype picture of Mrs. Childs as a diaphragm, illustrating the inventor's versatility when a needed piece of thin metal sheet was not on hand! Walter and Frederick Childs sold their exchange to the New England Telephone Co. on June 6, 1890 for $16,000 cash. Would that they had taken stock instead!

Fireworks and Politics

In the 1870s through the turn of the century, the Masonic Lodge and The Vermont Wheel Club were prominent social centers in Brattleboro. Walter was a member of both and enjoyed the camaraderie found there. As a billiard player he was without peer, often running 50 to 75 balls in a three ball game. He took particular delight in fly fishing and even before the railroad was built beyond Blanchard, Maine, made 14 annual pilgrimages to Moosehead Lake with club mates.

When locked up for setting off a rocket at the town Fourth of July celebration in 1883, he was greeted at the jail by 300 friends and supporters who petitioned the magistrate for his release! With equally strong support, he was elected a member of the Democratic State Committee, which he served from 1888-1894. He also served at various times as chairman of the county and town Democratic committees. A newspaper article described how he was discovered to be the anonymous donor of 20 turkeys to less fortunate townsmen after the second term election of Grover Cleveland in 1893. They were paid for by winnings from his election wagers.

Rudyard Kipling

He was nothing if not exuberant in his political organizing. His last effort in politics was to successfully send his good friend Dr. James Conland to the State Legislature in 1902 as one of the few Democrats to represent Brattleboro. It was Dr. Conland who introduced Walter to Rudyard Kipling when he came to live in Brattleboro in 1892.

Kipling had married Caroline Balestier, the sister of his good friend and collaborator Wolcott Balestier, who lived in England. The Balestier family lived outside Brattleboro, and Kipling became enchanted with the isolation of the area. He moved from England and built Naulaka, a spacious home just north of town. It was here he wrote *The Jungle Book* and used Dr. Conland, a former fisherman, to learn the world of the Gloucester fisherman, and write *Captains Courageous*. Though reticent and embroiled in his writing, Kipling had a close relationship with Dr. Conland who was Walter's closest friend. The three of them would meet every Sunday at the Childs house on Green Street to drink whiskey and soda around the dining room table while their wives attended church.

According to Stuart Murray's *Kipling in Vermont*, 1997, a favorite subject of discussion was the hereafter, which none of the participants apparently believed in. Kipling abandoned Vermont for England in 1896 after an attack on him by his drunken brother-in-law, and the embarrassing trial that followed.

Transitions

On January 16, 1899, Clara Childs died following a botched diagnosis and operation at a sanitarium in Cambridgeport, Massachusetts. Walter never recovered from the loss of his wife. His grief was apparently all-consuming. In the same year, he insisted his son Charles Frederick, my grandfather, take a trip around the world as a gift for having graduated from Yale University. Walter relished his letters that poured in from around the world and saved them all. The only other diversion to offset his grief was the work he did for Dr. Conland's political campaign.

In 1904, he was forced into retirement from the Estey Co. when he lost mobility in his right arm and hand due to "writer's cramp," which in today's terminology sounds like an advanced case of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. With his elder son Fred having moved to Chicago and his younger son George gone to St. Louis, the house on Green Street must have seemed a very lonely looking place for a crippled, unemployed widower of 53 years. Despondent, he took his own life on March 1, 1906.

Walter H. Childs, Collector of Coins

At some point after moving to Brattleboro, Walter started a coin collection; a hobby clearly suited to his methodical nature. In almost all his daily pursuits, this nature is central: the methodology of accounting, or recording the weather, of organizing the logistics of a telephone switchboard, or bringing organization to the Democratic voters of Windham County.

I surmise that collecting coins for Walter was a way to work his methodological wiles on history and aesthetics. In a small leather booklet, he checked off the various dates and mintmarks as specimens were added to the collection. On the back cover of the booklet are the names of dealers who supplied him, among whom were the Chapman brothers, Charles Steigerwalt, and other names familiar to numismatic historians.

He was unable to afford coins over $5 face value and thus set $5 gold half eagles as his upper denomination limit. In 1902, he decided the collection was of enough rarity and value to move his cabinet from under the stairway landing at Green Street and deposit it in the local savings bank vault.

Charles Frederick Childs

When Walter Childs died in 1906, his collection was inherited by his son, my grandfather Charles Frederick

Childs, who moved it to Chicago where he was learning the business of trading U.S. government bonds.

C.F. Childs & Co., "the oldest house in America specializing in government securities," was founded in 1911. During the next 44 years, he developed his business into a highly respected investment banking firm. C. Frederick Childs developed an interest in his father's collection late in life and added the denominations above $5 face value as well as many other specimens.

He had a strong working relationship with Charles Green and his wife Ruth, prominent Chicago coin dealers who had headquarters in the same building as C.F. Childs & Co. Green sold him many coins over the years, including the Watters 1804 silver dollar on October 1, 1945.

In 1952, C. Frederick Childs assigned the collection to me, his namesake. As I was eight years old at the time, my father Frederick Newell Childs (1913-1991) served as custodian. With the guidance of Kenneth Bressett and his son Philip from 1960 to 1991, my father and I—neither of us being collectors—upgraded several coins in the cabinet.

Although three generations have served as custodians, the integrity of this collection of American coins is the legacy of Walter Henry Childs. I honor my great-grandfather Walter for his inquisitive mind, pioneering scientific spirit, Yankee ingenuity, and his embracing the opportunities of life around him.

I don't doubt for a moment that he would enjoy the release of these coins to fellow collectors more than 120 years after he himself began his happy search.

C.F. Childs II
Redding Ridge, Connecticut

A Remembrance of the Childs Collection

Kenneth E. Bressett

The Mystery of the 1804 Dollar

Prior to 1960 very little was known about the origin of the mysterious dollars dated 1804. Wayte Raymond's prestigious *Standard Catalogue of United States Coins* described them as "restrikes" made at a time later than the date they bore. Most authors believed that some were "originals," and that others were made later for unknown reasons. Those who held that the coins were actually made in 1804 relied on Mint records and stories of how thousands of the ill-fated pieces were lost at sea or otherwise destroyed.

The controversy over this enigmatic coin sparked my interest in learning more about the origin and purpose for the United States Mint making such coins. Fortunately I was not alone in this quest and researchers Walter Breen, Lynn Glaser and Eric Newman offered to share their expertise and knowledge in an effort to find answers to the age-old questions.

Meeting Newell Childs

In our search for information we collectively sifted through hundreds of records, documents, and published reports about the origin of the 1804 dollars. During that investigation I made an effort to contact and interview the owners of each known specimen. It was that fortunate search that led me to become acquainted with F. Newell Childs, holder of the Imam of Muscat 1804 dollar that is included in this auction sale.

I was aware that Chicago coin dealer R. Green had offered an 1804 dollar for sale in 1945. Nothing more than that had ever been published because the buyer preferred to remain anonymous. Ruth Green was an accommodating friend who knew that I was seriously researching the history of the dollars, and when I asked for her help she relayed my request to Mr. Childs. A few days later I received an unexpected telephone call from him offering to assist me in any way possible.

My first face to face visit with Newell Childs was in his Chicago office in 1961. He was pleasant and accommodating. We soon learned that we shared many similar interests, and despite our age difference quickly became good friends. I learned that he was generally reluctant to meet with coin dealers because he had no interest in buying or selling any coins. The 1804 dollar was a treasured possession, and he had no desire to part with it.

After our initial meeting I made a point of visiting Newell (as he asked to be called) whenever I traveled to Chicago. We often talked about the dollar, and I learned that it was part of a major collection now in the name of his son that had been formed years ago. The collection, he said, included one United States coin of every date and denomination from half-cents to three-dollar gold pieces. He always had numerous questions ready to ask me about the coin market or specific coins. In time I was invited to examine the entire collection which was stored in a nearby bank vault.

Inventorying and Appreciating the Coins

When I learned that no thorough inventory had ever been made of the collection, I asked permission to catalogue, grade and appraise the holdings. This we did as a team effort with him learning about the material, and me enjoying every coin with each seemingly more exciting than the last. I cannot forget his asking why the 1794 dollar was in worn condition while all the others were so nice. Actually it was in relatively high grade, but it just seemed to pale alongside the many other superb pieces.

My visits with Newell were always a highlight of my trips to Chicago. We usually had lunch at his club and then went back to his office to chat about numismatics, or any number of other topics. He had traveled widely and was a great storyteller. His appearance, bearing, demeanor, and the always-present cigarette reminded me somewhat of the famous Duke of Windsor. It was easy to be fascinated by his wit and charm.

Where Is the 1804 Dollar?

On one visit to his home we examined some of the coins, and both took another look at the 1804 dollar to be sure it was still safely stored and in pristine condition. When it was lunch time he suggested driving to a restaurant in town. As we were leaving I noticed that the dollar was sitting on the dining room table and recommended that it be put away for safekeeping. At that, he casually placed it on top of the china cabinet where, he said, no one would think of looking for it. We enjoyed the rest of the day and I returned home without thinking again about the coin.

Several weeks later Newell called me to say that he could not find the dollar. He was concerned that it was missing and remembered that we were the last people to see it. He asked if I had any idea where it could be. After some thought, I asked if he had checked the top of the cabinet. There was a pause while he searched; then a sigh of relief when he reported it was still there.

The incident happened only a few years before his death, and had he not noticed that the piece was missing, it might still be on top of the cabinet. I believe it was then that the piece was returned to vault storage and never again seen by anyone aside from his son Fred until being consigned to Bowers and Merena in 1998 for auction in 1999.

Caring for the Collection

For nearly 40 years I was privileged to be a consultant for the Childs family and their fabulous coin collection. It was their desire to keep it intact to preserve the integrity of how it was formed nearly 130 years ago.

Over the course of time and changing generations, my son Philip Bressett, who is also a professional numismatist, was invited to act as conservator and consultant. It is likely that no one other than our two families have seen, or perhaps even heard of the collection, until this appearance at auction. Our pledge of secrecy is no longer necessary, and through this catalogue everyone can now enjoy seeing this unique collection the likes of which may never again be brought to light.

Ken Bressett
Colorado Springs, Colorado

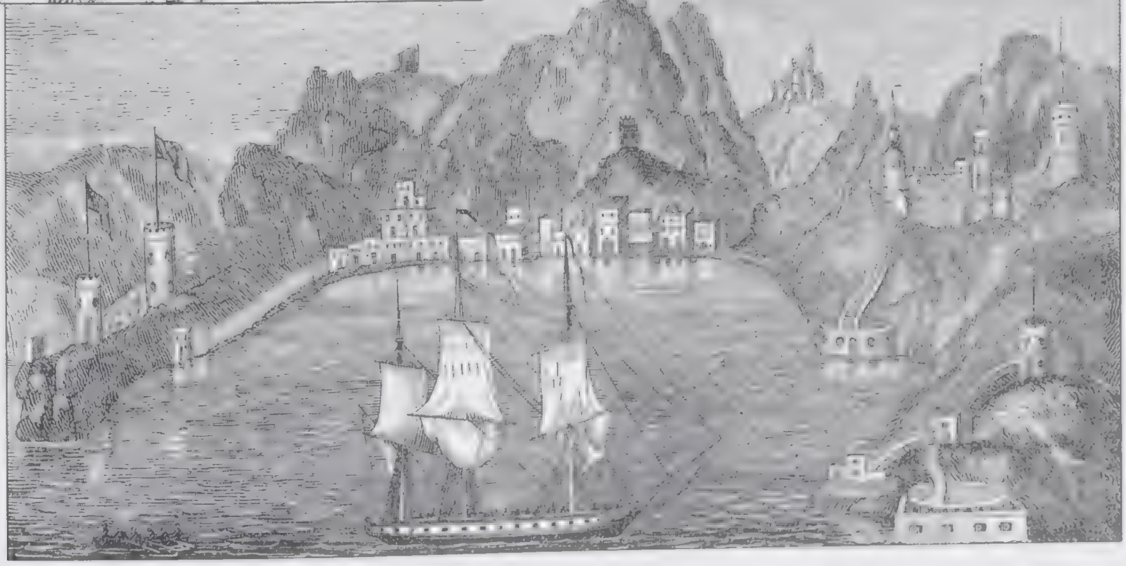
The Sultan of Muscat and the 1804 Dollar

Throughout the autumn of 1998, continuing into 1999, the Bowers and Merena team gathered information about the famous 1804 silver dollar, about Walter Childs and his family, and about the over one thousand coins in the Childs Collection.

Month by month the story of the 1804 dollar was committed to print as I reviewed existing commentaries on the subject (including *The Fantastic 1804 Dollar,* by Eric P. Newman and Kenneth E. Bressett, 1962), historical archives, and other sources.

Struck in the early 1830s from 1804-dated dies, the Childs Collection 1804 dollar is believed to have been part of a set of presentation coins made at the Mint. In the early 1830s, Edmund Roberts,

MUSCAT
OMAN
Tropic of Cancer
Sohar
Matarah
Ras el Hadd
Ras el Khabbah
Khore Jeramah
Semmed
Ibrah
Minna
Obri
Rostak
Beldan
Bureimi



Above: Detail of a nineteenth-century map showing Muscat on the Arabian shore of the Gulf of Oman. Right: The harbor of Muscat in 1838 as illustrated in Taylor's *The Flag Ship,* Vol. 1.

a private citizen who hailed from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, was a part of the scenario. A veteran of the maritime trade, Roberts was tapped by the Department of State to be a special emissary of President Andrew Jackson in a quest to develop treaties with nations in the area of the Indian Ocean and what today is called Indonesia. With the 22-gun battleship *U.S.S. Peacock* and an escort battleship and 300 men serving as his entourage, Roberts called upon several heads of state.

Treaties were negotiated with the Sultan of Muscat (the area today known as Oman) and the King of Siam (today's Thailand). After being ratified by Congress, the signed treaties were given to Roberts, and again with the *U.S.S. Peacock* and another battleship as escort, he sailed on a two-year voyage to deliver the documents. Special gifts to the rulers were sent from President Jackson, including the presentation coin sets, cut glass, maps, and prints.

By fortunate circumstance, in the course of researching the Childs Collection 1804 dollar, which is quite possibly the specimen delivered on October 1, 1835, to the Sultan of Muscat, I found that the Roberts family papers and other information were preserved in the New Hampshire Historical Society archives and at the Portsmouth Athenaeum, the latter a venerable institution founded in 1817, of which Roberts was once a member! In addition, a "Secret Mission File" of the Department of State yielded much information concerning how the delicate negotiations were to be handled with foreign emperors, how the purpose of the Edmund Roberts' mission was to be disguised so as not to attract the attention of the British, Dutch, or other sea powers who might sabotage it—and much more.

I decided to write a book to give the details of the 1804 dollar, including how it narrowly escaped capture by pirates! *The Rare Silver Dollars Dated 1804 and the Exciting Adventures of Edmund Roberts* was published in due course and received enthusiastic reviews.

In the meantime, Chris Karstedt, working with well-known publicist Donn Pearlman, launched a world-wide campaign for the Walter H. Childs Collection, while the Bowers and Merena organization prepared a handsome color-illustrated catalogue describing the coins. Copies were distributed during the summer, and at the time of the sale, August 30, 1999, participants in the auction were well informed and already pulsing with excitement and anticipation!

Then came the sale, in two sessions, conducted with a crowd that at times was standing room only.

By day's end—and what a day it had been—*The Coin* had broken every record in the book, and the Childs Collection had totaled $9.4 million.

It was an experience everyone who was there will remember forever.

Postscript: In connection with the present listing of "adventures," many pages could be written about the 1804 dollar itself, but I refer to the aforementioned Newman-Bressett book of 1962 and my own volume published in 1999, otherwise the *present* book would have to be doubled in size!

ADVENTURE NO. 21

THE 1868 (YES, 1868!) LARGE COPPER CENT

The official *mintage of large copper cents ceased in early 1857, but years later at the Mint certain employees decided to create a rarity—and produced a similar cent dated 1868! This went along nicely with the Type III 1804 silver dollars being made at the Mint about the same time. Today, the 1868 is an unsung rarity, and few have ever heard of it.*

* * *

Looking for Books

In the early 1950s, after I discovered the numismatic hobby, I spent countless hours reading every book about American coins that I could find. The be all and end all to popular references was *A Guide Book of United States Coins,* edited by R.S. Yeoman, and issued each year, with revised prices and updates. For many in the field, the *Guide Book* was a one-volume "library."

Wayte Raymond's *Standard Catalogue of U.S. Coins* was in print, but the distribution was erratic, and most hobby shops did not stock it. It seemed that this excellent text, published in over 15 editions since 1934, had been eclipsed by the *Guide Book,* for the latter was sold just about everywhere—in coin shops, of course, but also in general book stores, hobby shops, and even in Woolworth, Kresge, and S.H. Kress five-and-dime emporiums. Besides, Wayte Raymond was getting along in years and was spending most of his time enjoying retirement—with his wife Olga in their New York City apartment at 29 Sutton Place overlooking the East River, and at their getaway at Montauk, on the eastern tip of Long Island. Much of his coin stock

Scene of 1868, when *the cent* was made: Saturday afternoon in Central Park, New York City. At the time New York, Philadelphia, and Boston were the primary centers of coin collecting activity in America. (*Sunshine and Shadow in New York,* Matthew Hale Smith, 1868) was being liquidated through the office of the New Netherlands Coin Company, the proprietors being Charles M. Wormser and John J. Ford, Jr. Later, Ford took over the *Standard Catalogue* and published it for one edition, in 1957, after which it faded into obscurity.

There was not a great deal of interest in other books about coins, this due in part to most being out of print. Ebenezer Gilbert's 1916 book on half cents could hardly be found, M.L. Beistle's 1929 text on early half dollars was scarcer than many of the coins it described, and it took a lot of searching to track down D.W. Valentine's 1931 treatise on half dimes.

Undaunted, I tried to find copies of all of the standard books. The fact that some were hard to find was just dandy, as I didn't have much money, and in this way I was forced to buy them slowly. When found, most were quite inexpensive. I also was given, or purchased back copies of *The Numismatist* to 1904, then back to 1894 (the 1888-1893 issues were not acquired until later), the *Numismatic Scrapbook* back to 1935, and, not long thereafter, a complete run of the *American Journal of Numismatics*. Copies of most issues of the *Journal* were available cheaply from the American Numismatic Society, New York City, which had bundles of them stored in its cellar. I also acquired hundreds of old auction catalogues, most of which collectors were happy to give me. Interest in building numismatic libraries, while not nil, was very low.

Enjoying Books

In 1954 I met Jim Ruddy, who at the time was operating a coin office known as the Triple Cities Coin Exchange in Johnson City, New York. We became business partners in the Empire Coin Company on April 1, 1958, but before then I had spent much time as his house guest and associate in certain business transactions.

On some summer evenings we would sit in his backyard and "talk coins," quizzing each other on the contents of the *Guide Book*, which each of us had just about memorized, at least for the narrative text.

The great rarities were exciting, and although neither of us had ever seen most of them, we knew their stories. Among these were the 1913 Liberty Head nickel, 1894-S Barber dime, 1876-CC twenty-cent piece, 1827 quarter dollar, 1838-O half dollar, 1804 dollar, and 1884 and 1885 trade dollars. A lot of what I knew about these came from reading B. Max Mehl's old auction catalogues. Whenever a rarity was at hand, Mehl pulled out all stops and devoted dozens or even hundreds of words to it. As a result, such pieces seemed to acquire their own personalities.

1913
CENTS
1885
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
420 GRAINS 900 FINE
TRADE DOLLAR

Famous American rarities struck after the end of their regular series include these brilliant stars in the numismatic firmament, each one from the Eliasberg Collection: 1913 Liberty Head nickel, 1804 silver dollar (the story of which is told in Adventure No. 20, that being another specimen), and the trade dollar of 1885.

Certain of these rarities were issued *after* the regular series had been terminated, or a new design had been adopted. They were added to the end of the series. These included:

1913 Liberty Head nickel: The regular mintage of Liberty Head nickels was 1883-1912, but somehow five pieces were made during the following year, 1913—creating one of America's most famous rarities.

1804 silver dollar: Mintage of early silver dollars ended with pieces dated 1803. Years later in the 1830s the Mint made up some pieces dated 1804, for use in presentation sets. These dollars became numismatic rarities, and others, from a slightly different die combination, were made from about 1858 to, possibly, the early 1870s.

1884 trade dollar: Mintage of trade dollars extended from 1873 to 1883. However, somehow 10 pieces were made in 1884.

1885 trade dollar: And five pieces were made in 1885.

A watershed event in my life was the buying of a copy, probably for only a few dollars—I don't recall—of *United States Pattern, Trial, and Experimental Pieces. Being a List of the Pattern. Trial, and Experimental Pieces Which Have Been Issued by the United States Mint from 1792 Up to the Present Time.* This blue-covered volume was issued by the American Numismatic Society in 1913 and was written by William H. Woodin, with Edgar H. Adams taking the photographs.

In the pages of this book I found several other rarities of the preceding character, but they were not listed in the *Guide Book*, so few had ever heard of them. They were:

1868 Large copper cent: Of the style of 1857, but dated 11 years later.

1866 Quarter without motto: The motto IN GOD WE TRUST was added to the reverse of the quarter dollar, half dollar, and silver dollar in 1866. However, a few pieces of the 1866 issue *without* motto were found in later years. No one ever knew how many were made, but it was stated by *pattern* specialists that one each of the quarter and half dollar were struck and two of the silver dollar.

1866 Half dollar without motto: See preceding.

1866 Silver dollar without motto: See preceding.

Obviously, these were not *patterns* at all—for a pattern coin is a piece made to test a new alloy, or design, or some other concept. The preceding are *numismatic delicacies* pure and simple—right along with the 1913 Liberty Head nickel and other rarities previously mentioned.

By this time, I realized that if a coin was listed in the *Guide Book* it was highly desired by collectors, as this was the main and sometimes only text they consulted. If a coin was listed somewhere else, it would be overlooked by the vast majority of numismatists.

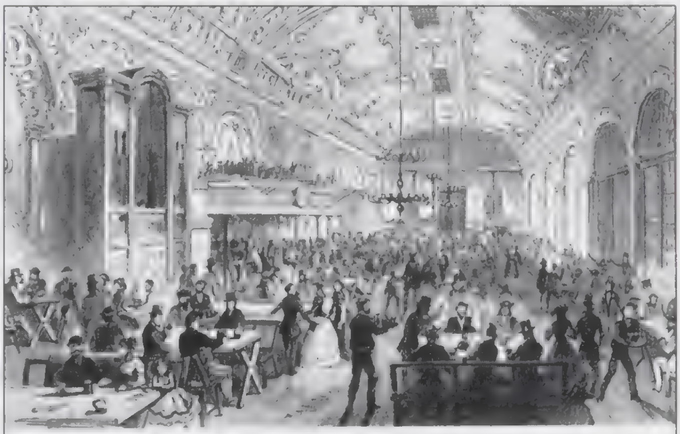
Although the *Guide Book* is devoted to United States coins of regular designs, some pattern pieces have crept into the listings. Most famous are the 1879 and 1880 Flowing Hair and Coiled Hair $4 gold "stella" coins. These are patterns pure and simple, as not a single piece was struck for circulation. They are listed in the Adams-Woodin 1913 book as patterns. However, as the pattern 1879-1880 stellas are listed in the *Guide Book*, they achieved wide popularity and immense value. Ditto for certain other patterns listed there, such as the 1856 Flying Eagle cent (regular Flying Eagle cents were not struck until 1857) and the "transitional" half dimes and dimes of 1859-1860.

Focus on the 1868 Large Copper Cent

Jim Ruddy and I discussed the fantastic potential that these great rarities might have if found. We quickly determined that the 1866 silver coins without motto were so rare that we might never find any, but the 1868 copper cent seemed to be worth tracking down.

The hunt was on!

The mid-1950s coincided with several fabulous events in the field of collecting pattern coins. The collection of King Farouk of Egypt, laden with patterns, was auctioned in Cairo in 1954, and the main buyers of such pieces brought them back to America and offered



Scene of 1868, when *the cent* was made: The Atlantic Garden, at 50 to 54 Bowery, in the lower part of New York City, was a gathering spot for over 100,000 German immigrants who lived in the area during the middle part of the nineteenth century, forming a community which some called "Little Germany."

The Atlantic Garden was an enclosed version of the outdoor beer gardens so popular in the fatherland, made quasi-realistic by murals of trees, hills, and buildings painted on the walls. Countless chairs were arranged around tables at which up to a thousand patrons gathered singly or in groups to lift their mugs and enjoy music. Card games, dice, and other table games of chance helped keep patrons there long into the night.

To the left the huge cabinet-like apparatus is, in fact, a self-playing orchestra, or *orchestrion*, made by Michael Welte in Vöhrenbach, in the Black Forest district of Germany, and brought to New York City earlier in the decade. For many years it entertained patrons of the Atlantic Garden. (*Sunshine and Shadow in New York*, Matthew Hale Smith, 1868) them for sale, these buyers being Abe Kosoff (of Beverly Hills, California), Sol Kaplan (of Cincinnati), and James P. Randall (of Chicago, later Fort Lauderdale).

In addition, Kaplan and Kosoff had hundreds of patterns in stock left over from the estate of William H. Woodin, which had been dispersed in bits and pieces in New York in the 1940s. Toward the end of the 1950s Jim Ruddy and I would purchase the Maj. Lenox R. Lohr collection of patterns *en bloc* from Abner Kreisberg.

The net result of all of the preceding was that there were lots of patterns for sale, but not much in the way of a retail market. Abe Kosoff was trying to remedy that by encouraging his friend and customer, Dr. J. Hewitt Judd, of Omaha, to write a book on the subject, to replace the 1913 Adams-Woodin text.

Year in and year out Jim Ruddy tried to sniff out some 1868 large copper cents. The American Numismatic Society had one in its collection, but it was not for sale and the curator did not want to trade it (the Society sometimes traded or exchanged pieces that were not in its core interest field).

Not much luck. Only *one* piece turned up!

Now and then another was found or came and went as part of a collection consigned for auction or purchased outright. Now as I write these words in the year 2001 I have handled about four or five different specimens. How many exist totally? No one knows, but it is probably about in the same league as the 1884 trade dollar (10 minted, all of which are accounted for today) and is rarer than the 1804 dollar (15 known).

I have always enjoyed buying and selling great rarities, and in later years of my career many of them have come my way. However, whenever I lay eyes on an 1868 large cent I think of "what might have been" had Richard S. Yeoman listed it in the *Guide Book*, where logic suggests that it belongs.

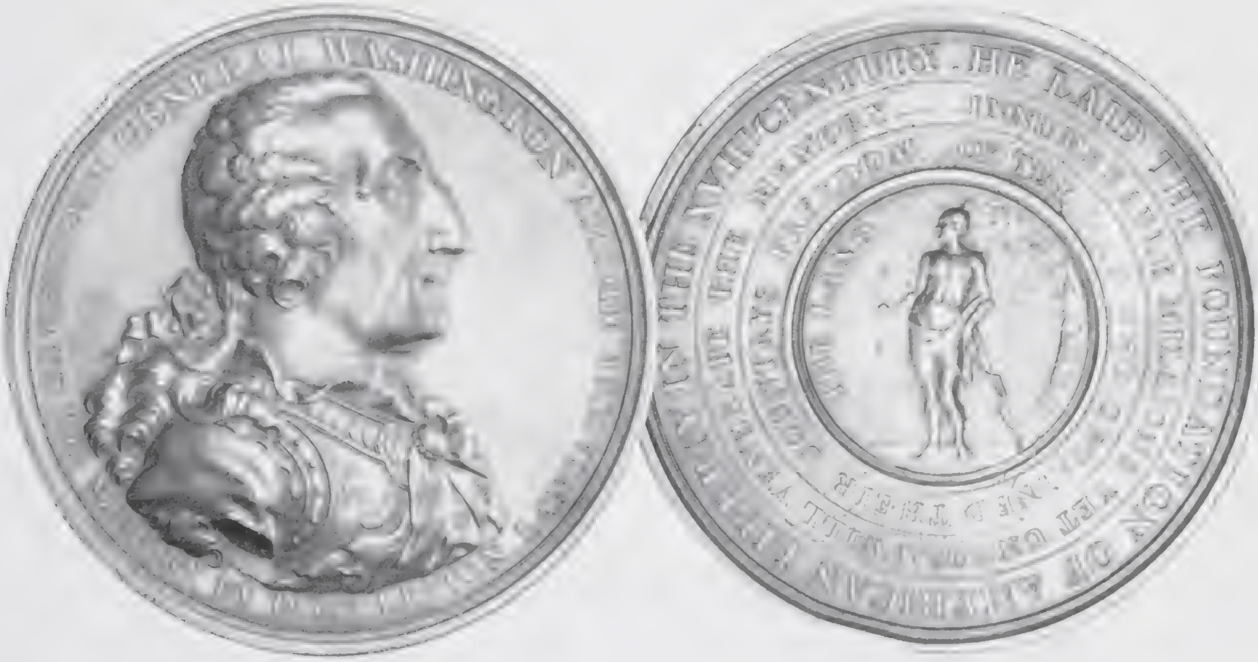
This remains one of my favorite rarities, never mind that few people know about it! Publicity-wise, it is antipodal to the 1804 dollar.

A gallery of directors and superintendents of the Philadelphia Mint from 1853 to 1892. At the center is O.C. Bosbyshell, who kept many choice "numismatic delicacies" for his own profit. The others, clockwise from top: James Pollock, Henry R. Linderman (under whose watch the 1868 large cent rarity was struck; Linderman was an officer in various capacities at the Mint for many years and made dozens of different rarities for his own account), J. Ross Snowden (under whose administration, 1853-1861, restriking and rarity-creating for profit began in a large way in the spring of 1859), Daniel M. Fox (the only person illustrated who is *not* known to have been involved in the restriking or creation of rarities), Adam Eckfeldt, and Col. A. Loudon Snowden. (*Illustrated History of the United States Mint*, published by George G. Evans, 1892)

ADVENTURE NO. 22

ECCLESTON'S MEDAL OF WASHINGTON

Tribute or Travesty? — Baker: "A singular conceit."



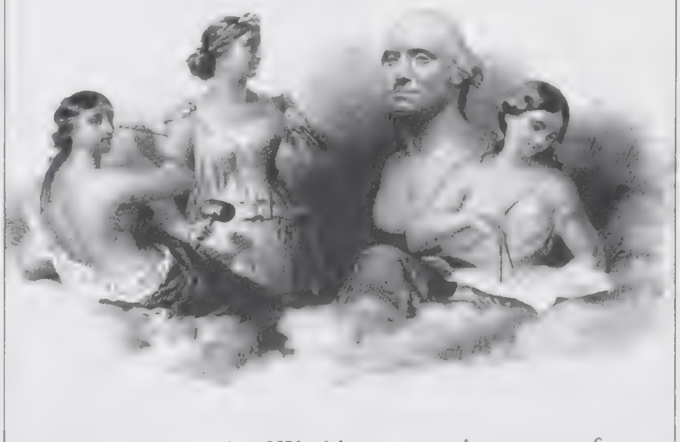
Following the death of President George Washington on December 14, 1799, many medals, tokens, and coins were struck in his honor. Among these one of the more fascinating is the so-called Eccleston medal, issued by Daniel Eccleston in 1805.

* * *

George Washington Honored

George Washington, born on February 22, 1732, served America with distinction, was the foremost figure in the Revolution, and was the first president of the United States.[1] After his death, December 14, 1799, he was honored in many ways, including by depiction on tokens and medals. During the nineteenth century such pieces were enthusiastically collected by numismatists, and for a time were the most desired specialty in the market (as hard as this may be to believe today!).

In 1885, W.S. Baker's study, *Medallic Portraits of Washington*, was published and described 651 varieties



The apotheosis of Washington—a vignette proof engraved by Danforth, Wright & Co., New York and Philadelphia, circa 1850s.

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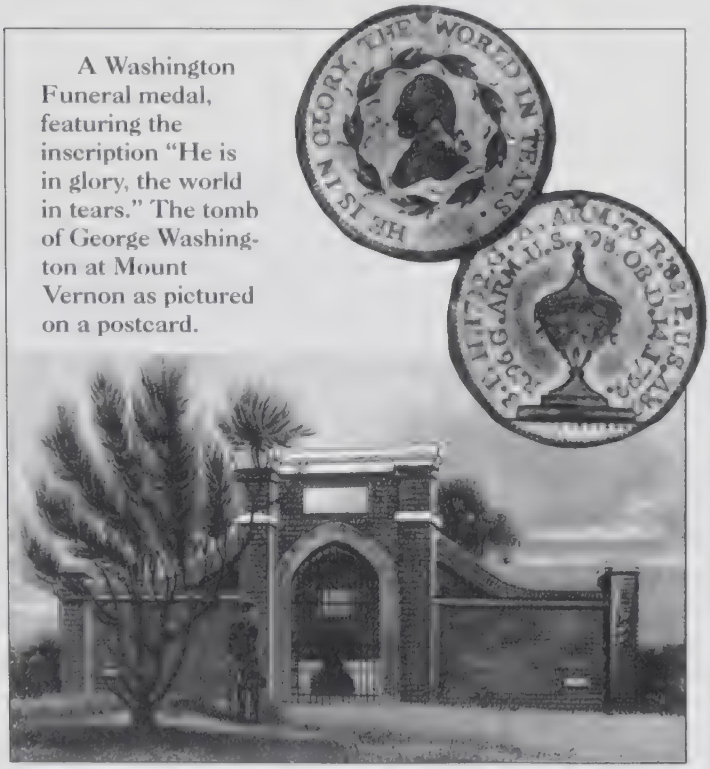
[1] Sources in particular include biographical notes by J. Harris Gibson, *The Coin Collector's Journal*, 1882, pp. 185-188, and W.S. Baker, *Medallic Portraits of Washington*, 1885, among many other publications.

known to him. The earliest medal relating to Washington is believed to be the piece struck in Paris circa 1778 to the order of Voltaire. The obverse depicts an imaginary portrait of Washington, as no graphic likeness was available to the engravers in France at that time. The inscription noted that Washington was general of the Continental Army in America. The reverse showed the instruments of war including a cannon, mortar, drum, trumpet, and flags, Many examples were struck in bronze, a small number in silver, and very few in tin. Using fictitious portraits in an era in which illustrated publications and other pictorial sources were scarce was hardly unusual. On certain other tokens and medals, Washington took the form of a Roman statesman, or the Duke of Wellington, or even his detested opponent, King George III of England. In the field of Spanish-American coins, engravers had no likeness of King Charles IV of Spain, so kept using the portrait of Charles III until they gained knowledge. What Christopher Columbus or Jesus Christ looked like is anybody's guess, and on numismatic items there are representations or guesses aplenty.

Nearly all Washington pieces endeavored to honor him. Inscriptions were often laudatory, even maudlin, and included such sentiments as: HE IS IN GLORY, THE WORLD IN TEARS; TIME INCREASES HIS FAME; HE LIVED FOR HIS COUNTRY; A MAN HE WAS TO ALL HIS COUNTRY DEAR; GEORGE THE GREAT; HOW ABJECT EUROPE'S KINGS APPEAR BY THE SIGHT OF SUCH A MAN; and HAIL FAIR FREEDOM'S FAVORITE SON. HAIL IMMORTAL WASHINGTON. Some medals gave an admonition or advice: GREAT WASHINGTON HAS LIVED FOR YOU, MARK WELL HIS STEPS, HIS COURSE PURSUE, and WHILE WE ENJOY THE FRUIT, LET US NOT FORGET HIM THAT PLANTED THE TREE. Another medal bore the interesting inscription PROVIDENCE LEFT HIM CHILDLESS THAT THE NATION MIGHT CALL HIM FATHER. Perhaps the most poignant inscription is that which briefly states the impact our first president had and continues to have on the American public: TIME INCREASES HIS FAME.



A Washington Funeral medal, featuring the inscription "He is in glory, the world in tears." The tomb of George Washington at Mount Vernon as pictured on a postcard.

A Remarkable Exception

Among the adulatory medals there is a piece which at first glance seems to satirize the Father of Our Country. Known as the Eccleston medal and bearing the date 1805, this piece is plentiful enough that just about anyone with the desire to do so can own one easily. I have bought and sold perhaps 40 to 60 examples over the years, nearly all being struck in copper. A few silver impressions are known as well.

By Eccleston's own account, subsequently quoted, he spent time in America in the late eighteenth century and was Washington's guest at Mount Vernon. After Washington's death, Eccleston expressed his "admiration" in a most curious way. He commissioned Thomas Webb (active circa 1804-1827) to cut the dies for a large medal.

The obverse depicts Washington encased in a heavy suit of armor, "a singular conceit," noted W.S. Baker. The legend surrounding is: GENERAL WASHINGTON INSCRIBED TO HIS MEMORY BY D. ECCLESTON. LANCASTER MDCCCV.

The reverse shows an Indian standing, head downcast, with an arrow in his right hand and leaning on a bow. The legend surrounds in several concentric circles: HE LAID THE FOUNDATION OF AMERICAN LIBERTY IN THE XVII CENTURY. INNUMERABLE MILLIONS YET UNBORN WILL VENERATE THE MEMORY OF THE MAN WHO OBTAINED THEIR COUNTRYS FREEDOM. Then, surrounding the Indian at the center, are the words THE LAND WAS OURS. In retrospect, the medal appears to be more of a commentary of the expropriation by colonists of Indian lands than a tribute to Washington.

However, the word *conceit*, used by Baker (an American), in English dialect can mean "a favorable opinion; esteem."[1] For a long time I viewed the Eccleston medal as a satire, but in creating the present *Adventures* text I have modified my view. It seems that, indeed, Eccleston held Washington in high esteem.

Jefferson Receives a Medal

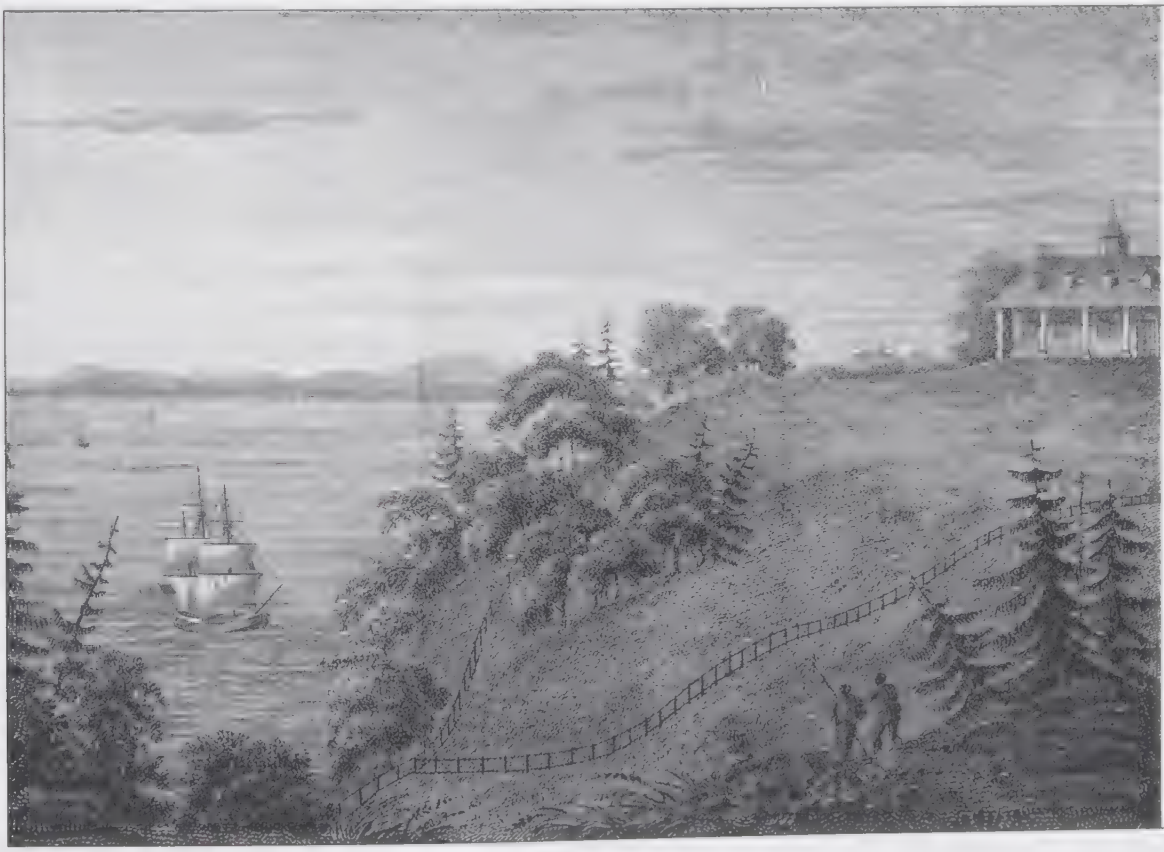
President Thomas Jefferson was the recipient of one such medal, as evidenced by correspondence:[2]

Eccleston wrote to Thomas Jefferson in May 1807, and he enclosed a specimen of the Eccleston medal which is in the collection of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation and is on display at Monticello:

> Sir,
>
> I beg your acceptance of a Medallion of your Great Predecessor in the high station which you at present so worthily fill, which I have lately had struck off to his memory, and request the favours of your forwarding a couple to the honourable Bushrod Washington [Washington's nephew, a Supreme Court justice at the time], for himself, and Judge Marshall.
>
> Notwithstanding the *Date* on the Medallion, these are some of the first I have issued. I believe it is the largest medal, and in the highest relief that has been struck off in this country for some time.
>
> If it would not be occupying too much of your time, I should be glad just to be informed of the safe arrival of this small parcel and I am,
>
> Sir, Your assured friend, Daniel Belteshazzar Plantagenet Eccleston

Jefferson replied to Eccleston in November, 1807:

> Washington, November 21, 1807
> Sir,
>
> I received on the 22nd ultimo your favor of May 20th, with the medals accompanying it, through the channel of my friend and ancient class-mate, Mr. Manning, of Liverpool.
>
> That our own nation should entertain sentiments of gratitude and reverence for the great character who is the subject of your medallion, is a matter of duty. His disinterested and valuable services to them have rendered it so; but such a monument to his memory by the member of another community, proves a zeal for virtue in the abstract, honorable to him who inscribes it, as to him whom it commemorates. In returning you my individual thanks for the one destined for myself, I should perform but a part of my duty were I not to add an assurance that this testi-



Mount Vernon on the shore of the Potomac River, the home of George Washington. Daniel Eccleston is said to have visited here earlier. (Published December 18, 1798, by J. Stockdale, Piccadilly, London)

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[1] Cf. *Random House Webster's Unabridged Dictionary;* this distinction was called to my attention by John Kraljevich, Jr., in 2001.

[2] May 1807 and January 1810 citations furnished by John J. Kraljevich, Jr.; the others provided by Mark Borckardt from *Writings of Thomas Jefferson Definitive Edition*, Albert Ellery Bergh, Editor, Volume XI, The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association of the United States, Washington, D.C. 1907, Page 396.

> monial in favor of the first worthy of our country will be grateful to the feelings of our citizens generally.
>
> I immediately forwarded the two other medals and the letter to Judge Washington, with a request that he would hand one of them to Chief Justice Marshall. I salute you with great respect.
>
> [Thomas Jefferson]

Eccleston wrote back to Jefferson, but it took him over two years to do so. In January 1810, Eccleston revealed more about his medallic production. In part,

> Could I procure a *likeness*, I perhaps might become the Medalist of the Presidents of the United States, and those Medals, in all probability, many generations hence, will be preserved in the cabinets of the Virtuosi, when you and I are mouldering in the dust.

We imagine Eccleston, now mouldering, is pleased with those among the Virtuosi who value his medal so highly!

Eccleston's Death Announced

On December 21, 1816, the weekly *Lancaster Gazette* published a notice of Eccleston's death and included information concerning his life and accomplishments.

Daniel Eccleston was born in Fylde, in Lancashire, England, the account noted. After the American Revolution he spent extensive time in North America. While accounts are somewhat conflicting, his stay in the Caribbean on the islands of Antigua and Barbados is said to have occupied "several years."[1]

The memorial noted that he had many eccentricities, but was good-hearted. He had engaged in diverse projects and business ventures in Lancaster, including brokering insurance and selling liquor. Among his inventions was a cast iron loom for weaving sail cloth, a device that was widely used and brought him much profit. A coach with oversize wheels was made for use in fording streams and traveling on beaches at high tide. He was a member of the Society of Friends (Quakers).

We also learn that he was a numismatist:

> Mr. Eccleston was also a collector of coins and medals. It is to this extraordinary individual we are indebted for the large and handsome medal of General George Washington. He sent, as presents, copies of this medal to the government authorities in America, and one to the Emperor of Russia.
>
> In the year 1794 (the date on the coin) he issued a halfpenny token, called the Lancashire halfpenny, payable in Lancaster, Liverpool, and Manchester. This piece shows an excellent portrait of the Quaker gentleman.[2]
>
> He also caused to be struck a large medal, perpetuating the memory of Napoleon Bonaparte....

Eccleston Reads His Own Obituary

It is not often that someone can read his own obituary. In America, Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain) did it, and in England at an earlier time, Eccleston seems to have done so—or perhaps the entire affair was a stunt.

In the very next issue of the *Lancaster Gazette* Eccleston had this to say:

> And the Ladies cry, in doleful dumps, "Daniel's dead. What's Trumps???"
>
> Friend Minshull, I hope, through the channel of the next *Lancaster Gazette* to have the privilege of thanking thee for the pains thou hast taken in the obituary of thy last publication, in sketching my character, though it is, in several instances, erroneous.
>
> Had I been a worldly-minded man during my residence on that small speck of earth on which thou still continue to exist, I had many opportunities of amassing a fortune, during my residence in America and the West Indies, as well as in England, and might, long before thou sent me across the river Styx, have been driving about amongst you in my leathern vehicle, called a coach—but my visionary schemes, as thou callest them, were not entered into solely with the view to profit.
>
> I might truly have said with St. Paul, that I had known both how to want and how to abound; and I could also have added, that I never murmured, but was always content with every dispensation of Providence.
>
> To the sketch thou hast drawn. I will with thy leave, just add one circumstance, namely, that I was two or three years in Virginia and the northern provinces of America; and in my returning from Montreal to Boston, sailed down Lake Champlain and Lake George, in a birch-bark canoe, with the King of the Connawaga nation, and five other Indians, and was eleven days and twelve nights on the lakes and in the woods with them. During my residence in Virginia, when at Alexandria, I had the pleasure, and I may also add the honor, of meeting with General Washington, who gave me an invitation to call and spend a few days with him on his estate on Mount Vernon. We are totally precluded from giving you poor mortals any description of this happy country.
>
> Hope humbly then, with trembling pinions soar,
> Wait the great teacher Death, and God adore.
> Know this, enough for man to know,

---

[1] Elsewhere (not in this account) information suggests that he was born in 1745 in Cornah Row (or "Cornarrow") near Kirkham, Preston.

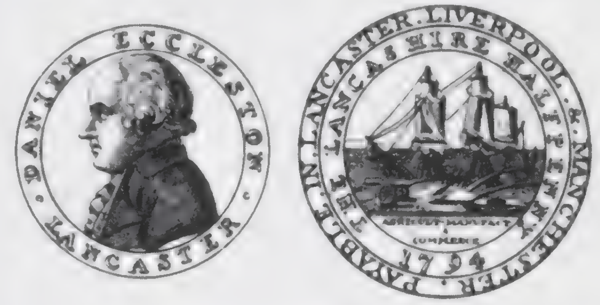
[2] Dies for the Lancaster halfpenny were cut by Ponthon, who also created dies for the Copper Company of Upper Canada tokens. Some account of the latter medals appears in an article by John J. Ford, Jr., in the May-June 1951 issue of *The Coin Collector's Journal*, a periodical published by Wayte Raymond and named after Scott's nineteenth-century magazine.

> That virtue only makes your bliss below,
> And all your knowledge is yourselves to know.
>
> From my habitation in Heaven, the new Jerusalem, the City of the saints solemnity, in which, through the infinite mercy of God, I hope to obtain in inheritance.
>
> Daniel Belteshazzar Fitz William Caractacus Cadwallador Llewellyn Ap-Tudor Plantagenet Eccleston.

The Eccentric Eccleston

Should there be any doubt of Eccleston's eccentricity, his spelled-out name should settle the question!

The issue also included a note by editor Minshull: "The account of the death of Mr. Daniel Eccleston, of this town, inserted in our last, we are happy to learn is not true; as our readers will find by referring to a letter we have received from him, and inserted in a subsequent column."



Daniel Eccleston himself as shown on a 1794 Lancaster halfpenny made for the numismatic trade. The band around the reverse illustration depicts the lettering on the edge of the token. (*The Virtuoso's Companion and Coin Collectors Guide*, published by M. Denton, Vol. I to IV, 1795-7)

Although Eccleston stated that he was the guest of Washington at Mount Vernon, the writer has not been able to locate any other information about this visit. As Eccleston seems to have loved publicity, perhaps some newspaper or other accounts exist.

In later years, the Eccleston medal became highly prized on both sides of the Atlantic. W.S. Baker may or may not have called its propriety into question with his "singular conceit" comment in his 1885 text (depending upon the meaning he attached to *conceit*), *Medallic Portraits of Washington*. A reading of contemporary information suggests that Eccleston intended to truly honor his American acquaintance.

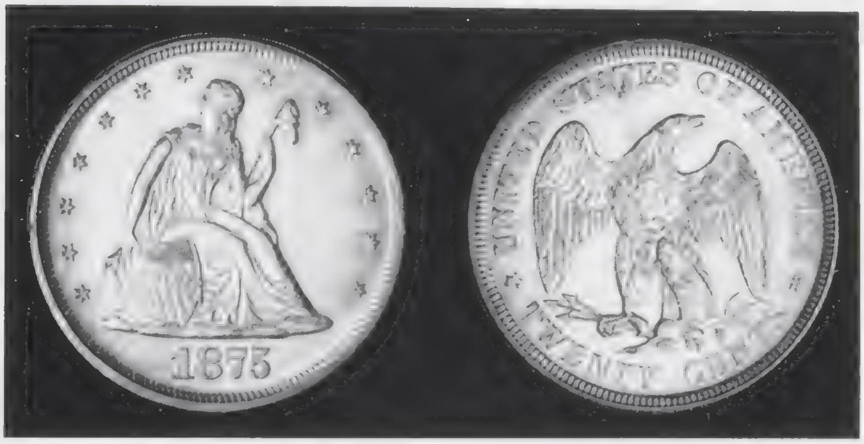
Generally, the Eccleston medals played to excellent reviews, such as in an earlier account in *American Journal of Numismatics*, April 1879. One of America's best-known collectors, Joseph J. Mickley, had died, and a medal was produced in his honor:

> THE MICKLEY MEDAL
>
> A decided novelty, in the medal line of art, is that which is about to be noticed, and has just appeared among us. I refer to the medal of the late Joseph J. Mickley of Philadelphia, executed at the Royal Mint of Stockholm, Sweden. The singularity of this piece of work consists, first, in the commemoration and honoring of an American citizen by a foreign artist; and secondly, in the fact that the artist is a lady, doubtless the only lady engraver of dies of any note ever known.
>
> There have been numerous medals of American officers and statesmen struck in Paris, at a time when we had no home artists equal to such work; but these were ordered by our government, and therefore not from the engraver's own heart, save as he expected to be paid for his labor.
>
> I should here make an exception, in the case of the remarkable medal of General Washington, struck by or for account of D. Eccleston of Lancaster, in England, in 1805. Such a medal must have been the result of a high appreciation, and of not a little boldness and independence. Those who own it ought to prize it.
>
> The [Mickley] medal under consideration is two-inches in diameter, and the particular piece now before me is in fine silver; but as the dies are here, other pieces will shortly be struck in bronze, for those wishing to obtain them.
>
> The obverse exhibits a very fine head, and an excellent likeness of the venerable subject; and around is the legend, giving his name, and stating the fact of his having been President of the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Philadelphia; NAT. 1799 OB. 1878. Also in small letters, LEA AHLBORN, FEC. On the reverse is an oak wreath, enclosing the motto, STAT SINE MORTE DECUS.

ADVENTURE NO. 23

THE ILLOGICAL TWENTY-CENT PIECE OF 1875

Now you see it now you don't!



The silver 20¢ piece seemed like a good idea when it was launched in 1875, but rejection by the public was immediate—and coinage was diminished, then stopped. Today, such coins are all but forgotten, except by numismatists. Among the fewer than 10 varieties struck, the 1876-CC is a great rarity today.

A New Denomination

Produced only from 1875 to 1878, and for circulation only in one truly significant year, 1875, the 20-cent piece is the most short-lived of all American coin denominations.

Although coinage of a 20-cent piece had been suggested in the United States as early as 1791, and in neighboring Canada the 20-cent piece had been distributed in quantity in 1858, it was not until February 1874 that the notion of this denomination was translated into reality, this side of the border.[1]

The scenario in 1874 was centered on the West Coast. Small-denomination minor coins, including Indian cents, two-cent pieces, nickel three-cent pieces, and Shield nickel five-cent pieces, had never circulated there to any extent, nor was the silver three-cent piece used in commerce. For this reason, the San Francisco Mint produced none of these denominations. Half dimes were made in San Francisco from 1863 through 1873, when these silver coins were abolished, and most pieces quickly disappeared from circulation, thereby causing a problem:

In 1874 the smallest denomination regularly seen in circulation was the dime or 10¢ piece. If someone wanted to buy an item priced at 10¢ and did not have a dime, and offered 25¢ in payment, he received a Spanish-American silver one-real "bit" (worth 12½¢) in change. Such coins, once plentiful, had disappeared from circulation in the East, but many were still used in the West. If a 12½¢ piece was not available, then a merchant was apt to give a dime, facetiously called a "short bit," as change for a 10¢ purchase. As stated, half dimes were not often seen and thus could not be used readily.

By rather complicated reasoning, if the 20-cent piece became a reality, someone could make a 5¢ purchase, tender a 25¢ piece in payment, and receive a 20¢ piece as change. Or, for a 10¢ purchase a 20¢ piece could be offered, and change of 10¢ would be given.

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[1] Peripheral mention is made of the Spanish *pistareen*, a two-reales silver coin that at an earlier time in some areas in America was current at about 20 cents; the July 17, 1775 Virginia currency emission was denominated in pistareens.

Perhaps a simpler explanation is that which appeared in the *American Journal of Numismatics*, July 1875, to the effect that the 20¢ pieces were made to replace Spanish silver coins that still circulated in the West and Southwest.

In February 1874 Senator John P. Jones of Nevada introduced a bill for the 20¢ piece. At the time Nevada was America's leading silver-producing state. While fortunes from the Comstock Lode in Virginia City, Nevada, had been at a high crest in the 1860s and had prompted the establishment of the Carson City Mint a few miles away from Virginia City, by the 1870s the price of the metal had fallen, and times were difficult. New markets were needed. Certainly, a new silver denomination such as the 20¢ piece would help. Jones in his proposal suggested that the 20¢ piece would facilitate change-making and help eliminate the use of Spanish-American coins.

The New Coin Reaches Circulation

On March 3, 1875 the 20¢ piece became legal. Patterns had been prepared beginning in 1874, a final design had been selected, and coinage began in earnest.

The obverse featured Christian Gobrecht's motif of Miss Liberty in a seated position, stars surrounding, and the date below.

The reverse displayed a motif by William Barber and depicted a perched eagle, somewhat similar in configuration to that used on the trade dollar, surrounded by UNITED STATES OF AMERICA and the denomination expressed as TWENTY CENTS.

The edge is plain, unlike other silver denominations of the era (which had reeded edges).

At the time there were no silver coins of any kind in circulation in the Midwest and East as specie (gold and silver coin) payments had been suspended by the Treasury Department in 1862, during the Civil War when citizens were hoarding coins, and payments had not yet resumed. Thus, mintage of the new silver 20¢ pieces was concentrated in the Western states, as per these circulation strike mintage figures:

1875 Philadelphia Mint: 36,910 coins.
1875-CC (Carson City Mint): 133,290.
1875-S (San Francisco Mint): 1,155,000.

The Philadelphia Mint coins were not placed into circulation at the time, but the Carson City and San Francisco pieces were.

It was soon realized that just because a coin of this denomination was available, merchants did not necessarily change their habits, and the piece was a failure virtually at its inception. They were immediately confused with quarter dollars of somewhat similar size and design.

Shortly thereafter, the denomination became an object of confusion and derision, and circulation strike coinage declined precipitously. The next year the production figures were as follows:

1876 Philadelphia Mint: 14,640 coins.
1876-CC (Carson City Mint): 10,000.

After that time, coinage of the 20¢ piece was limited to several hundred Proofs each year for collectors, 1877 and 1878, after which the denomination was no more.

In 1878, Senator John Sherman testified before a House committee about the 20¢ piece and said that it had been created "only because Senator Jones asked for it."

Dr. Henry R. Linderman in his book, *Money and Legal Tender*, said it was a mistake to introduce the piece, but that it was a proper denomination between a dime and a half dollar and should have been used instead of a quarter dollar. It will be recalled that there is no $25 bill.

A Rarity is Created

Per the earlier quoted figure, 10,000 1876-CC 20-cent pieces were struck. However, by the time they were produced by the Carson City Mint, the denomination was rendered effectively obsolete, so apparently nearly all were melted. The destruction of these coins is probably the subject of the following request written by Mint Director Henry Richard Linderman on May 19, 1877, addressed to James Crawford, superintendent of the Carson City Mint:

"You are hereby authorized and directed to melt all 20-cent pieces you have on hand, and you will debit 'Silver Profit Fund' with any loss thereon."

Thus, a rarity was created!

In 1876 at the Carson City Mint, selected samples of all coins were set aside for examination by the annual Assay Commission, which met in Philadelphia on Wednesday, February 14, 1877. Presumably, only a few 1876-CC 20¢ pieces were shipped east for the Commission. This group later probably constituted most of the supply available to numismatists. It seems likely that a few were paid out in Nevada in 1876-1877, accounting for a handful of worn and impaired pieces known today.

Perhaps the first specimen of the 1876-CC 20¢ piece to attract notice in a catalogue was that sold in the R. Coulton Davis Collection sale by New York Coin & Stamp Company, January 20-24, 1890. At that time only a few numismatists collected coins by mintmark varieties, and virtually nothing was known of the 1876-CC.

The rarity and desirability of the 1876-CC 20-cent piece was first showcased to a wide audience in an interesting monograph, *A Treatise on the Coinage of United States Branch Mints*, by Augustus G. Heaton, published in 1893. Prior to that time, numismatists had been concerned primarily with dates, and whether a coin had a mintmark or not made little difference. Heaton, a facile writer, listed 17 "causes of attractiveness" for collecting mintmarks, herewith reprinted:[1]

Causes of Attractiveness

1st. Mint Marks in their progressive issue at New Orleans, Dahlonega, Charlotte, San Francisco, and Carson City show the direction of our country's growth and its development of mineral wealth.

2d. Mint Marks in their amount of issue in varied years at different points offer the monetary pulse of our country to the student of finance.

3rd. The denominations of any one Branch Mint, in their irregular coinage and their relation to each other at certain periods, indicate curiously the particular needs of the given section of the land.

4th. A knowledge of the Branch Mint coinage is indispensable to an understanding of the greater or less coinage of the Philadelphia Mint and its consequent numismatic value.

5th. A knowledge of the coinage of the different Branch Mints gives to many usually considered common dates great rarity if certain Mint Marks are upon them.

6th. Mint-Mark study gives nicety of taste and makes a mixed set of pieces unendurable.

7th. Several dies were used at Branch Mints which never served in the Philadelphia coinage, and their impressions should no longer be collected as mere varieties.

8th. The very irregularity of dates in some denominations of Branch Mint issues is a pleasant exercise of memory and numismatic knowledge.

9th. This irregularity in date, and in the distribution of coinage, gives a collection in most cases but two or three, and rarely three or more contemporaneous pieces, and thus occasions no great expense.

10th. As the Branch Mints are so far apart their issues have the character of those of different nations, and tend to promote correspondence and exchange, both to secure common dates in fine condition and the rarities of each.

11th. The United States coinage has a unique interest in this production at places far apart of pieces of the same value and design with distinguishing letters upon them.

12th. As Mint Marks only occur in silver and gold coins they can be found oftener than coins of the baser

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[1] Heaton's style of capitalization is preserved.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
TWENTY CENTS
CC
1876

One of fewer than two dozen specimens known of the 1876-CC twenty-cent piece. Although 10,000 were struck for circulation, it is likely that none were ever released into commercial channels. It is the writer's opinion that the extant pieces were saved from those set aside for the Assay Commission.

The Carson City Mint building as it appeared in the early twentieth century, after coinage there had ceased.

> metals in fine condition, and neither augment or involve a collection of the minor pieces.
>
> **13th.** As Mint Marks have not heretofore been sought, or studied as they deserve, many varieties yet await in circulation the good fortune of collectors who cannot buy freely of coins more in demand, and who, in having access to large sums of money, may draw therefrom prizes impossible to seekers after older dates.
>
> **14th.** The various sizes of the mint marks O, S, D, C, and CC, ranging from the capital letters of average book type to infinitesimal spots on the coin, as well as the varied location of these letters, defy any accusation of monotony, and are far more distinguishable than the characteristics of many classified varieties of old cents and 'colonials.'
>
> **15th.** Mint Marks include noble enough game for the most advanced coin hunter, as their rarities are among the highest in value of United States coinage, and their varieties permit the gathering in some issues of as many as six different modern pieces of the same date.[1]
>
> **16th.** The face value of all the silver Mint Marks to 1893, being less than one hundred and fifty dollars, they are within the means of any collector, as aside from the economy of those found in circulation, the premiums for rarities are yet below those on many coins of far inferior intrinsic worth.
>
> **17th.** As the new Mint at Philadelphia will have a capacity equal to all existing United States Mints, it is probable that others will be greatly restricted or even abolished in no long time, and that Mint Marks will not only cease as an annual expense, but be a treasure in time to those who have the foresight to collect them now.[2]

In his accompanying narrative Heaton mentioned the 1876-CC 20-cent piece in two places, noting in the preface that it was "excessively rare in any condition," and in the main text the following: "The pieces of 1876-CC have become very rare, as we have mentioned in our preface, from the negligence of western collectors, or the indifference involved in mintmark rarities."

Heaton, who lived in Washington, D.C., had many other accomplishments as well, including designing the 50¢ commemorative stamp for the World's Columbian Exposition, writing poetry, and serving as president of the American Numismatic Association.

The June 1894 issue of *The Numismatist* included two interesting fillers, possibly related, but who knows?:

> Among advanced collectors of mintmarks are Edward Goldschmidt, of New York, William M. Friesner, of Los Angeles, and George W. Rice, of Detroit.
>
> Three of the rare 20-cent pieces of 1876 from the Carson City Mint have lately turned up in Uncirculated condition. It was not two days before they were incorporated into three of our leading collections where their presence is highly appreciated.

In due course other examples of the rare 1876-CC 20¢ piece attracted notice including in the Dr. S.L. Lee Collection auctioned by J.W. Scott & Co. on June 12, 1899. The Lee cabinet was a particularly fine one, and many other delicacies were included. The buyer of the 1876-CC 20¢ piece was well-known numismatist John M. Clapp (this specimen later went to Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr.).

Another 1876-CC was offered by Édouard Frossard in the J.G. Hubbard Collection sale on December 10, 1900, and was purchased by S. Benton Emery (whose collection was sold by Bowers and Merena Galleries, November 1984, this coin appearing as Lot 492). From such beginnings in the late nineteenth century the 1876-CC became highly prized, and it has been a mark of distinction if a major cabinet includes an example.

Mention of the Clapp-Eliasberg specimen was made by Edgar H. Adams in *The Numismatist*, March 1911, in his column, "Live American Numismatic Items":

> Mr. Elmer S. Sears is exhibiting one of the greatest prizes of the mint mark field—an Uncirculated specimen of the extremely rare 20-cent piece of 1876, of the Carson City Mint.
>
> This piece is remarkable for the fact that although ten thousand are said to have been struck at the Nevada mint in that year, still not more than four pieces can now be located. One of these is owned by Mr. John H. Clapp of Washington, another by Mr. Virgil M. Brand of Chicago, and the third by Mr. H.O. Granberg of Oshkosh, Wis.

The Adams account brings together several of the most famous names in numismatics at the time. Elmer S. Sears was for several years a partner with Wayte Raymond in the U.S. Coin Company. Virgil M. Brand (1861-1926), wealthy Chicago brewer, devoted most of his life to coins and assembled a magnificent holding. Granberg had one of the finest cabinets of his era within which were the 1804 dollar and the 1884 and 1885 trade dollars among other delicacies.

As the years progressed and interest in mintmarks became more intense, the field was studied carefully. Today the population of extant 1876-CC 20¢ pieces is believed to be about 20 pieces.

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[1] Actually impossible, as the "CC" mintmark never overlapped with the "C" or "D"; the real maximum possible is five of the same date (the 1857 half eagle, for example).

[2] A new Philadelphia Mint building, planned to replace the facility in use since 1833 (foundation laid July 4, 1829), would be ready for production in 1901.

In the late 1950s, Baltimore dealer Tom Warfield found a group of seven, eight, or possibly nine splendid Mint State coins in his home town. Each piece was a lustrous gem, delicately toned, and virtual perfection. It is my opinion that these may have come from someone who once served on the Assay Commission which in 1877 reviewed the prior year's coinage.

The genesis of this cache was never revealed, but was variously thought by others to have been T. Harrison Garrett (who died in 1888, had a fabulous collection, but did not seem to have acquired many mintmarked issues; in my opinion, he can be eliminated as a possibility, especially as his estate did not contain even a single specimen of the 1876-CC 20¢), Waldo C. Newcomer, or Frank G. Duffield. Even the name of Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr., was mentioned. Four of these coins were sold to the writer, who subsequently distributed them into as many different collections. Several more were sold to John J. Ford, Jr., of New Netherlands Coin Company.

The Johnsen Study

An interesting study of the 1876-CC 20-cent piece by Monfort A. Johnsen appeared in the November 1980 issue of *The Gobrecht Journal*. He noted that research in the National Archives revealed that by January 8, 1876, 129,029 examples of the 133,290 twenty-cent pieces coined of the previous year, 1875-CC, had been paid out, leaving 4,261 1875-CC issues in the vault. Public demand was very low, and for the next four months the Mint paid out only an average of 247 coins per month.

It was conjectured that Mint Director Henry Linderman in April 1876 requested that 10,000 20-cent pieces be minted to replenish the low inventory, although, in fact, relatively few were being bought at the time. The same writer noted that "Linderman was under some pressure by the silver interests in Congress to strike large numbers of coins from that metal, and it would have been quite embarrassing to him if the Carson City Mint were to have run out of 20-cent pieces or any other silver denomination. Also, he had routinely sent the Carson City Mint six obverse and four reverse 20-cent dies for coinage purposes in 1876."

On May 8, 1876, and also on May 15, 1876, there were 13,315 20-cent pieces in the vault at Carson City, reflecting an addition prior to May 8 of 10,000 of the new 1876-CC coins. These were probably made during the first week in May, but no specific records have been located. From May 8, 1876 through May 11, 1877, only 954 20-cent pieces were paid out, or about 95 coins per month. It is not known what dates these were, but they quite possibly could have been 1875-CC, while the coinage of 1876-CC remained intact in cloth bags.[1] There would have been no particular reason to have dipped into the 1876-CC coinage with 1875-CC pieces still on hand. Thus, when Director Henry Linderman wrote to Carson City Mint Superintendent on May 19, 1977, directing him to melt all of the twenty-cent pieces on hand, it seems likely that this included all of the 1876-CC issues plus whatever 1875-CC coins remained.

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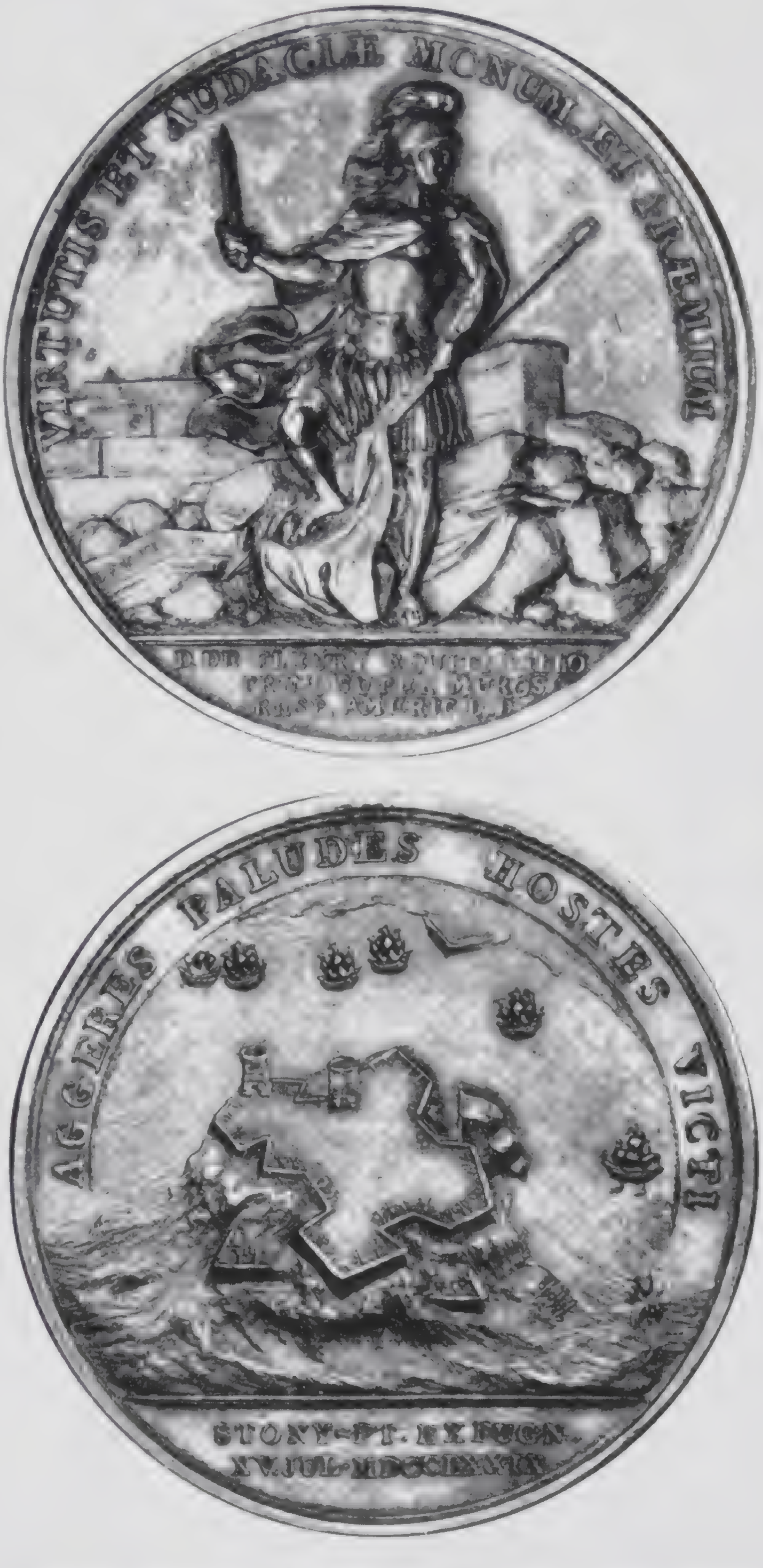
[1] In correspondence dated July 18, 2001, Harry E. Salyards proposed a scenario to explain how some 1876-CC 20¢ pieces may have escaped from the Carson City Mint. Using Monfort Johnsen's research, Salyards hypothesized that if the 20¢ pieces at the Carson City Mint were put up in bags of 2,500 coins each, Johnsen's research could translate to a May 15, 1876 inventory of four bags of newly minted 1876-CC pieces (10,000), one unopened bag of 1875-CC (2,500) and an open bag of 1875-CC (815) totalling 13,315 pieces. By September 23 of the same year, 360 more pieces had been paid out, presumably from the opened bag of 1875-CC, which would have been reduced to 455 pieces, leaving a total in storage of 12,955. By March 11, 1877, the total coins on hand had dropped to 12,359 20¢ pieces, which would have used up the 455 in the open bag of 1875-CCs. Salyards suggests that the remaining 141 coins paid out were taken from one of the unopened bags of 1876-CC 20¢ pieces, instead of the unopened bag of 1875-CC, explaining how a limited number of this rarity came to be in general circulation in Nevada.

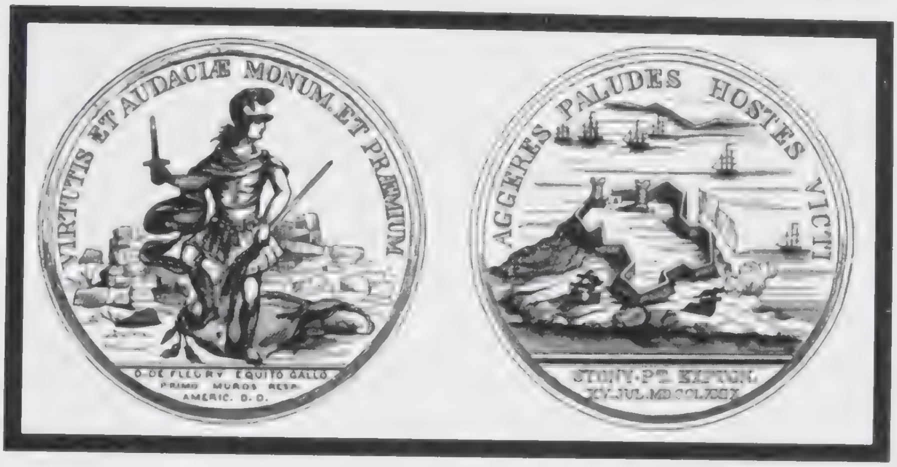

VIRTUTIS ET AUDACIÆ MONUM. ET PRÆMIUM
AGGERES PALUDES HOSTES VICTI
STONY-PT. EXPUGN.
XV. JUL. MDCCLXXIX

Enlarged illustration of the silver medal believed to be the identical specimen awarded to Lt. De Fleury for his accomplishment at Stony Point, a fortress on the Hudson River, during the Revolutionary War. (Harry W. Bass, Jr. Collection, Part I, 1999, Lot 2082)

Adventure No. 24

What De Fleury Did at Stony Point

A Classic Medal


VIRTUTIS ET AUDACIÆ MONUM. ET PRÆMIUM
D. DE FLEURY EQUITO GALLO PRIMO MUROS RESP. AMERIC. D. D.
AGGERES PALUDES HOSTES VICTI
STONY-PT. EXPUGN. XV. JUL. MDCCLXXIX

Depiction of the medal awarded by Congress to De Fleury. (Benson J. Lossing, Field Book of the American Revolution, *1852).*

A Direct Contact with History

This "adventure" is a little trip to the past, the era of the Revolution, and one of its important (numismatically) participants....

Among the medals offered in the Harry W. Bass, Jr. Collection, Part I, was one that is believed unique in private hands today (in 2001, I was made aware that another is held by the Massachusetts Historical Society[1]).

Similar to the Libertas Americana medal in the same sale (which is featured as another "adventure" in the present text), this created a great amount of attention, and several clients known only for their interests in federal coins all of a sudden paid attention to this!

The description of Lot 2082:

M. De Fleury medal. Betts-566. ***Original by DuVivier.*** **Silver. Plain edge. Believed unique. Nearly Mint. Prooflike fields.** 726.4 grains. 45.8 mm.

Attractive silver and light iridescent patination. A superb medal, sharply struck, exquisitely detailed. This *identical specimen is mentioned by famous American historian Lossing and famous numismatic researcher Betts,* giving it an elegant provenance (both quoted below). This is the only contemporary medal voted by Congress during the Revolution, to be awarded to a French officer in the service of the young United States. And, it is believed that this is the only known specimen of that medal! As is indicated by the following description, this is one of the most important early American medals to cross the auction block in our generation.

This medal became famous after the publication of Benson J. Lossing's *A Pictorial Field Book of the American Revolution,* 1852, which gave a fine "spread" and illustrated the piece. As might be expected, the community of American numismatists strongly desired to have examples of this medal for their cabinets. However, the original dies were not to be found to make restrikes. Accordingly, at a later date copy dies were made at the Philadelphia Mint, of modern lettering and with the added inscription REPRODUCTION 1880 (these are described as Julian MI-4 and are not further treated here).

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[1] By John Kraljevich, Jr. The MHS specimen can be pedigreed back to 1790: Jefferson to Washington (1790); Washington estate to Daniel Webster to MHS.

Description of the obverse: At the center is the personification of Lt. Col. François Louis Tessiedre De Fleury as a Roman warrior, with helmet, flowing cape, skirt of mail, and sandals, grasping the pole of the British flag and trampling the cloth with his foot. The backdrop is of the cut-stone walls of a fortress, breached on the right side and with broken stones and rubble at the right foreground. A dislodged stone from the battlement is inscribed DU VIVIER S. Around the top border is the inscription, VIRTUTIS AUDACIÆ MONUM. ET PRÆMIUM [To valor and bravery a monument]. In the exergue is the inscription D. [*sic;* should be F.] DE FLEURY EQUITI GALLO / PRIMO SUPER MUROS / RESP. AMERIC. D.D. [De Fleury, officer of France, first to mount the walls, Republic of America has presented this gift; D.D. representing *dono dedit*, or gave this gift].

Description of the reverse: A panoramic bird's-eye or balloonist's eye view is given of the star fort (but of slightly modified shape) on a high rocky escarpment bordered by water and marshy lowland at Stony Point. The scenario depicts the fort in British hands prior to assault by the American troops. In the Hudson River between the fort and the opposite shore are six British sailing ships, the rightmost of which seems to be firing two guns toward the shore (in an action not explained by history; perhaps practice). The fort walls are intact in this view, and the pennant—dramatically oversize for visual effect on the medal—is blowing in the breeze. Cannons are seen in place with supplies of round shot nearby. Two tall stone turrets are on the front rampart of the fort. Around the top border is the inscription, AGGERES PALUDES HOSTES VICTI [Fortifications, marshes, and enemies overcome], while in the exergue is this lettering: STONY-PT. EXPUG. / XV. JUL. MDCCLXXIX [Stony Point vanquished, 15 July 1779].

De Fleury's Accomplishment

François Louis Tessiedre De Fleury was born at St. Hippolyte, France, on August 28, 1749. As an adult he served in the French army, attaining the rank of aide-major. When the hardships of the colonists in the American Revolution became known in France, many Frenchmen volunteered their services, with Marquis de Lafayette being the best remembered by historians.

De Fleury came to the United States and was posted as an engineer at Fort Mifflin on May 22, 1777. He was wounded in the attack upon that fortification. Later, he served with valor at the Battle of Brandywine, and still later was in action at Red Bank, after which he was made lieutenant colonel in the Continental Army. At a later time, Baron von Steuben recommended that he be assigned as an inspector.

In the Continental Army's attack to recapture the American fort at Stony Point, New York (at that time under capture by the British), De Fleury was in command of the right vanguard of the advancing American troops. A marshy area lay in front of the fort, making the path difficult. He was the first person to cross the breached wall of the fort, and, per Anthony Wayne's later report, destroyed "the enemy's standard with his own hands." This action is depicted on the obverse of the medal.

In recognition for his valor at Stony Point, Congress on July 1779 unanimously voted that he be given a silver medal.

Later, when substantial French forces arrived in America, he resigned from the Continental Army to join his countrymen on American soil under Count Rochambeau. He is believed to have met his death in the dark days of the French Revolution, 1794.

Benson J. Lossing, distinguished nineteenth-century American historian (his contributions to *numismatics* are noticed at length in the 1998 book, *American Numismatics Before the Civil War, 1760-1860*, among other places), devoted several pages to Stony Point in his *Pictorial Field Book of the Revolution*, 1852, Vol. II, pp. 176 ff., there illustrating the medal in question, presumably from the specimen offered as part of the Bass Collection.

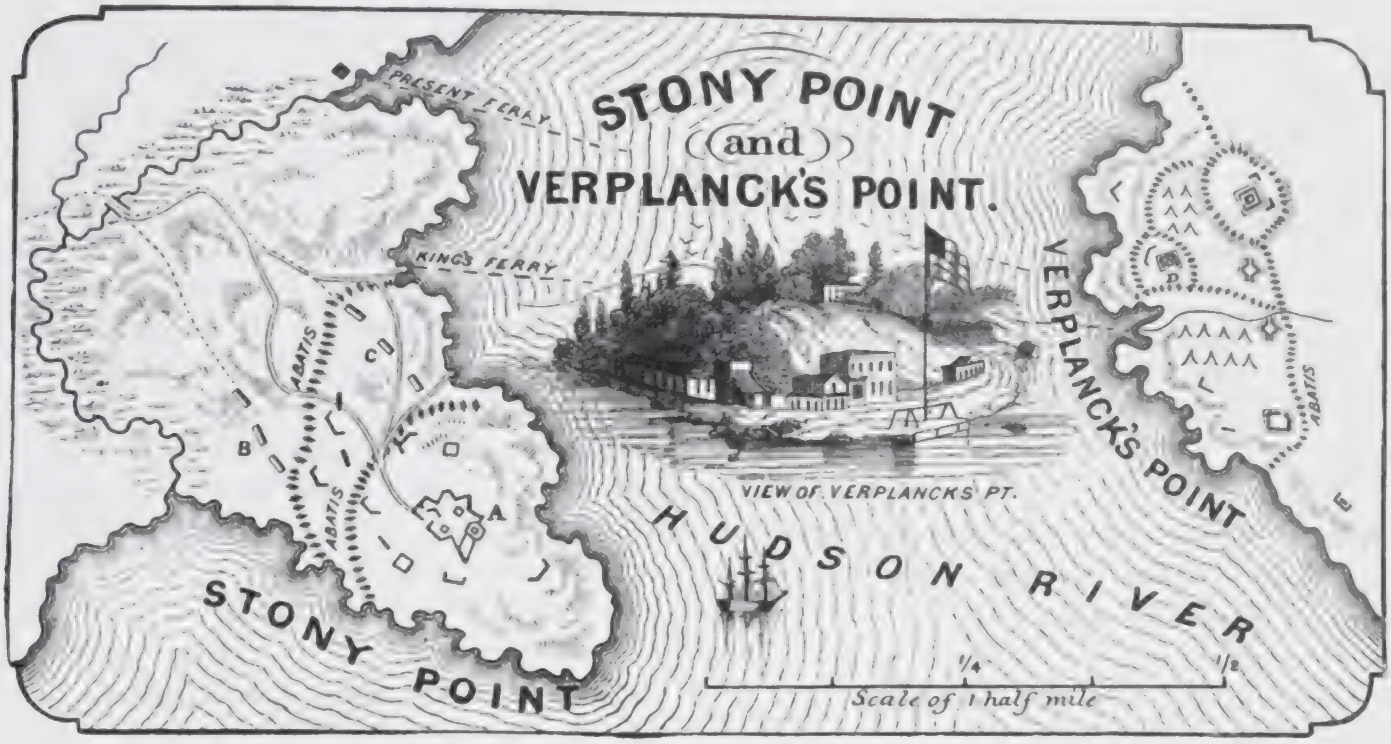
Lossing said this regarding De Fleury:

> De Fleury was descended from Hercule Andre de Fleury, a French nobleman, who was the preceptor of the grandson of Louis XIV, during the latter years of the life of that monarch. He was afterward made cardinal and prime minister.
>
> The subject of our sketch came to America soon after the news of the revolt reached France. Washington received him kindly, obtained for him a commission, and he proved to be a brave and worthy soldier. Educated as an engineer, his talents were brought into requisition here. In that capacity he was acting at the time of the engagement at Fort Mifflin, on the Delaware. He was at the battle of Brandywine, and for his gallantry there Congress gave him a horse. He returned to France soon after the capture of Stony Point.

And this regarding the action at Stony Point:

> The small forts at Verplanck's and Stony Points [on the Hudson River] were captured by the enemy commanded by Sir Henry Clinton in person, on the 1st of June 1779. The garrison of Stony Point consisted of only about 40 men, and that at Verplanck's of 70 men, commanded by Captain Armstrong.

As these forts secured a free communication between the troops of New England and those of the central and southern portions of the confederacy, Clinton determined to dislodge the Americans there-



Map of Stony Point and, across the Hudson River, Verplanck's Point, both occupied by the British in the summer of 1779. (Lossing, *Field-Book of the Revolution*, Vol. I)

from. Accordingly, on the 30th of May, he sailed up the river with a strong force, accompanied by General Vaughan; the flotilla was commanded by Admiral Collier.

They landed in two divisions on the morning of the 31st, the one under Vaughan, on the east side, eight miles below Verplanck's, and the other under Clinton, on the west side, a little above Haverstraw. The garrison at Stony Point retired to the Highlands on the approach of the enemy, and the fort changed masters without bloodshed.

The next morning, the guns of the captured fortress, and the cannons and mortars dragged up during the night, were pointed toward Fort Fayette opposite, and a heavy cannonade was opened upon it. Unable to make a respectable resistance to this assault, and attacked in the rear by Vaughan's division, the little garrison surrendered themselves prisoners of war. The loss of these forts was greatly lamented by Washington, and his first care was to make an effort to recover them for West Point was now in danger. The main body of the American army was moved from Middlebrook toward the Highlands and Washington established his quarters at Smith's Cove, far in the rear of Haverstraw. Sir Henry Clinton gave orders for the immediate strengthening of the forts, and to guard the detachments left for the purpose, he descended the river with his army only as far as Phillipsburgh, now Yonkers.

On the 23rd of June, Washington established his headquarters at New Windsor.... On the 1st of July, General Wayne was appointed to the command of the light infantry of the line, and was stationed in the vicinity of the Dunderberg, between Fort Montgomery and the main army at the Clove. The British had now greatly enlarged and strengthened the two forts in question, well supplied them with ammunition and stores, and had them strongly garrisoned.

The force at Stony Point consisted of the 17th Regiment of foot, the grenadier companies of the 71st, and some artillery; the whole under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Johnson of the 7th. The garrison at Verplanck's was commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Webster, and was quite equal in force to that at Stony Point. Several small British vessels of war were anchored in the bay within close cannon shot of the forts. Such was the situation of the two armies, when the attack of the Americans under Wayne and Howe upon Stony Point and Verplanck's Point was planned and executed by order of Washington.

On the morning of the 15th of July, all the Massachusetts light infantry were marched to the quarters of Wayne at Sandy Beach, fourteen miles from Stony Point. At meridian on that exceedingly sultry day, the whole body moved through narrow defiles, over rough crags, and across deep morasses, in single file, and at eight in the evening rendezvoused a mile and a half below Stony Point. There they remained until General Wayne and several officers returned from reconnoitering the works of the enemy, when they were formed into column, and moved silently forward under the guidance of a Negro slave belonging to a Captain Lamb who resided in the neighborhood.

The position of the fortress was such that it seemed almost impregnable. Situated under a huge rocky bluff, an island at high water, and always inaccessible dryshod, except across a narrow causeway in the rear, it was strongly defended by outworks and a double row of *abatis*. Upon three sides of the rock were the waters of the Hudson, and on the fourth was a morass, deep and dangerous. But Wayne was not easily deterred by obstacles; and tradition avers, that while conversing with Washington on the subject of this expedition, he remarked with emphasis, "General, I'll storm hell if *you* will only plan it." He possessed the true fire of the flint, and was always governed by the maxim, "Where there's a will there's a way." He resolved to storm the fort at all hazards, and only waited for the ebbing of the tide, and the deep first slumber of the garrison, to move toward the fortress.

It was half past eleven o'clock at night when the Americans commenced their silent march toward the fort. All the dogs in the neighborhood had been killed the day before, that their barking might not give notice of strangers near. The Negro, with two strong men disguised as farmers, advanced alone. The countersign was given to the first sentinel, on the high ground west of the morass, and while he was conversing with Pompeii, the men seized and gagged him. The silence of the sentinel at the causeway was secured in the same manner, and as soon as the tide ebbed sufficiently [this portion of the Hudson being virtually sea level], the whole of Wayne's little army, except a detachment of 300 men under General Muhlenburg, who remained in the rear as a reserve, crossed the morass to the fort on the western declivity of the promontory, unobserved by the enemy. The troops were now divided into two columns, the van of the right, consisting of 150 volunteers, under Lieutenant-Colonel De Fleury, and that of the left, of 100, under Major Stewart, each with unloaded muskets and fixed bayonets. An *avant-garde* of 20 picked men for each company, under Lieutenants Gibbons and Knox, preceded them, to remove the *abatis* and other obstructions. These vans composed the forlorn hope on that memorable night.

At a little past midnight the advanced parties moved silently to the charge, one company on the southern, and the other toward the northern portion of the height. They were followed by the two main divisions; the right, composed of the regiments of Febiger and Meigs, being led by General Wayne in person. The left was composed of Colonel Butler's regiment, and two companies under Major Murfey. The Americans were undiscovered until within pistol shot of the pickets upon the heights, when a skirmish ensued between the sentinels and the advanced guards. The pickets fired several shots, but the Americans, true to orders, relied upon the bayonet, and pressed forward with vigor. The garrison was aroused from their slumbers, and instantly the deep silence of the night was broken by the roll of the drum, the loud cry *To arms! To arms!*

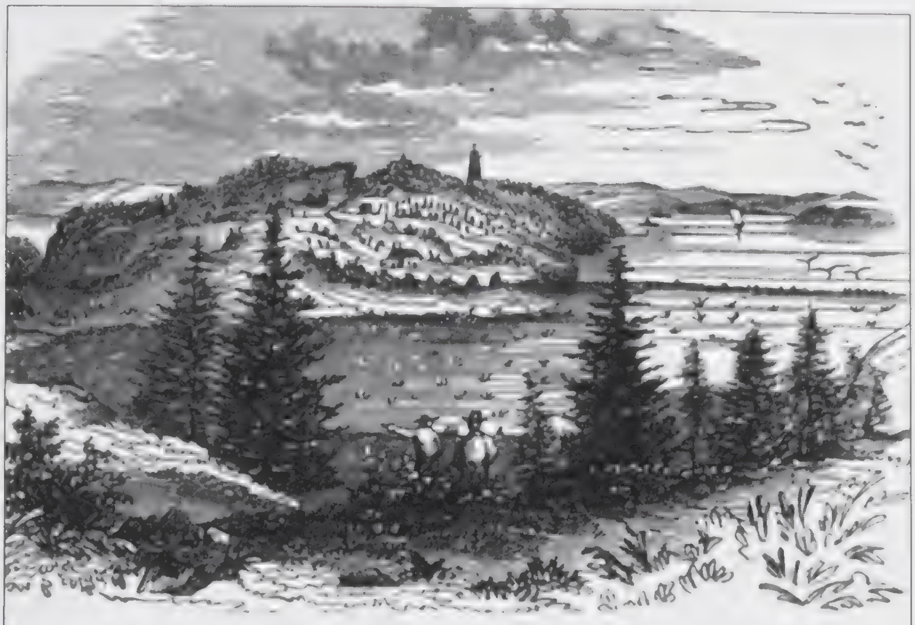
The rattle of musketry from the ramparts and behind the *abatis*, and the roar of cannon, charged with the deadly grapeshot [*sic;* round shot is depicted on the medal] from the embrasures. In the face of this terrible storm, the Americans forced their way at the point of the bayonet, through every obstacle, until the van of each column met in the center of the works, where each arrived at the same time.

At the inner *abatis*, Wayne was struck upon the head by a musket ball, which brought him upon his knees. His two brave aids, Fishbow and Archer, raised him to his feet, and carried him gallantly through the works. Believing himself mortally wounded, the general exclaimed, as he arose, "March on! Carry me into the fort, for I will die at the head of my column!" But the wound was not very severe, and he was able to join in the loud huzzas that arose when the two columns met as victors within the fort.

Colonel De Fleury first entered the works, and struck the British standard with his own hands. The garrison surrendered at discretion as prisoners of war, and that brilliant achievement was rendered the more glorious for the clemency, which the victors exercised toward the vanquished. Not a life was taken after the flag was struck and the garrison had pleaded for quarters. Wayne had but 15 killed and 83 wounded; the British had 63 killed; and Johnson, the commander, with 543 officers and men, were made prisoners. The ships of the enemy lying in the river in front of Stony Point slipped their cables and moved down to a place of security. Before daylight, Wayne sent to the commander-in-chief the brief but comprehensive reply, of which a facsimile is here given:

> Stony Point, 16th July 1779, 2 o'clock a.m.
>
> Dear General [George Washington]
>
> The fort garrison with Col. Johnston and our officers and men behaved like men who are determined to be free.
>
> Yours most sincerely,
>
> I remain [Anthony Wayne]

At dawn the next morning the cannons of the captured fort were turned upon the enemy's works at Verplanck's Point under Colonel Webster, and a desultory bombardment was kept up during the day. Major General Robert Howe had been sent to attack Fort Fayette, but on account of delays, and some misconceptions of Washington's orders, he did not make the attack in time to dislodge the garrison. News of Webster's critical situation and the capture of Stony Point was speedily communicated to Sir Henry Clinton, and he immediately sent relief to the men-



View of the fort at Stony Point and the Hudson River. In the foreground is a swampy lowland which made access to the fort difficult from this direction. (Lossing).

aced garrison at Verplanck's. Howe withdrew, and the enterprise was abandoned.

Washington, clearly perceiving the danger of attempting to retain the post at Stony Point with so few troops as could be employed in the service, concluded to order an evacuation, and destruction of the works after the ordnance and stores should be removed. This was accordingly done on the night of the 18th. All that was originally intended was accomplished, namely, the destruction of the works and the seizure of the artillery and stores. A large portion of the heavy ordnance was placed on a galley to be conveyed to West Point. As soon as the vessel moved, a cannonade from Verplanck's and the British shipping was commenced upon it. A heavy shot from the *Vulture* struck it below watermark, and the galley went down at the point just above Caldwell's Landing, where speculation recently made credulity seek for treasures in a sunken vessel alleged to have belonged to the famous Captain Kidd. If, as asserted, a cannon was drawn up from a vessel lying at the bottom of the river there, it was doubtless one of the pieces taken from Stony Point, and the "ship's timbers" there discovered are the remains of the old galley. The "treasures," if secured, would be of little worth in these "piping times of peace."

The British repossessed themselves at Stony Point on the 20th, but they had little of value left them but the eligible site for a fortification.

The storming and capture of Stony Point, regarded as an exhibition of skill and indomitable courage, was one of the most brilliant events of the war. General Wayne, the leader of the enterprise, was everywhere greeted with rapturous applause.

Congress testified their grateful sense of his services by a vote of thanks "for his brave, prudent, and soldierly conduct." It was also resolved that a medal of gold, emblematical of this action, should be struck, and presented to General Wayne. Thanks were also presented by Congress to Lieutenant Colonel De Fleury and Major Stewart, and a medal of silver was ordered to be struck and presented to each. The conduct of Lieutenants Gibbons and Knox was warmly applauded, and brevets of captain were given to each, and to Mr. Archer, the volunteer aid of Wayne, who was the bearer of the general's letter to Washington on the occasion.

Pursuant to the recommendation of the commander-in-chief, and in fulfillment of promises made by Wayne before the assault, with the concurrence of Washington, Congress resolved, "That the value of the military stores taken at Stony Point be ascertained and divided among the gallant troops by whom it was reduced, in such manner and proportions as the commander-in-chief shall prescribe."[1]

Pierre Simon Benjamin DuVivier

The dies were cut by famous French artist and engraver Pierre Simon Benjamin DuVivier (sometimes given as Duvivier), who was born on November 5, 1728, the son of Jean DuVivier, himself a famous artist and medalist (in numismatics, sometimes referred to as DuVivier Pere), who maintained an atelier in the Louvre in Paris. In 1764, *our* DuVivier was named official medalist to the king. In the Revolutionary War era and immediately following, there was little capability in America for the striking of large-diameter medals, and artists and facilities in Paris were often employed. DuVivier's works are well known and in the American repertoire are highlighted by the Washington Before Boston medal among other masterpieces. The Paris Mint provided the facility for striking.

"Biography" of This Specimen

In 1852 in his *Field Guide to the American Revolution*, Benson J. Lossing wrote of the specimen believed to be the piece later offered in the Bass I sale:

> This identical [to the illustration in Lossing] silver medal was found by a boy while digging in a garden at

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[1] Numismatic note: The preceding indicates that the breach in the fort wall and the stone rubble within may indicate artistic license (unless the rubble was from an earlier confrontation). The cannons were fired with canister or grapeshot, not round shot as seems to be depicted on the medal.

> Princeton, New Jersey, toward the close of April 1850, and was deposited in the bank at that place for the inspection of the curious. How the medal came there is uncertain. De Fleury returned to France before the medal was struck, and it probably was never in his possession. Congress was afterward in session at Princeton, and the medal may have been lost by the secretary, in whose custody it properly belonged until delivered to the recipient of the honor.

In 1894 this specimen was discussed by C. Wyllys Betts in the book published posthumously, *American Colonial History Illustrated by Contemporary Medals:*

> There is reason to believe that an impression of this medal found at Princeton, N.J., in April 1850, was the original intended to be presented to De Fleury. Congress was in session there, at one time, and it is thought that this may have been sent there, and lost by the person having it in his care. De Fleury is said to have returned to France before his medal reached America. This is the only one of the three [early medal varieties relating to the action at Stony Point] which spells Stony Point correctly. The dies are lost. Eds.[1]

Sometime after the turn of the twentieth century the Princeton-found De Fleury medal is believed to have been acquired by W.W.C. Wilson, of Montreal, Canada, who developed an intense interest in coins, tokens, and medals.[2] On June 11, 1908, he became a member of the American Numismatic Society. Wilson also joined the American Numismatic Association, and in 1909 was unanimously elected to the office of first vice-president. In autumn 1910 he rendered a signal service to the ANA by purchasing from Farran Zerbe *The Numismatist,* the official magazine of the Association. After the death of the magazine's founder, George F. Heath in 1908, Zerbe, representing the ANA, journeyed to visit Heath's widow in Monroe, Michigan. There he pulled a fast one and bought the magazine for his own account. In 1910, after *The Numismatist* had not lived up to its expectations for profit, Zerbe sold it to Wilson, who presented it to the ANA as a gift.[3]

After Wilson's death, Wayte Raymond cataloged his collection and offered it in a series of three auctions held at Anderson Galleries in New York City, 1925-1927, under the title of *The Important Numismatic Collection Formed by the Late W.W.C. Wilson, Montreal, Canada. United States and Canadian Coins, Early American and Canadian Historical Medals, Medals Presented to North American Indian Chiefs, Foreign Coins and Medals.* The De Fleury medal was Lot 805 in the sale.

The medal was acquired by Henry Chapman, then in the twilight of his career, and upon his passing in 1935 went into his estate. On March 4, 1946, it was again sold, at that time or later passing the numismatist who consigned it to New Netherlands Coin Company's sale of April 18-19, 1972, there offered as Lot 613, purchased by Harry W. Bass, Jr.

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[1] The editors were William T.R. Marvin and Lyman Haynes Low; as is seen, this is an adaptation of Lossing, but not credited as such; some of Lossing's details were omitted by Betts and/or his editors.

[2] This link is assumptive, as no "paper trail" has been located.

[3] For reasons unknown today, in the 1940s the ANA Board of Governors decided to set up an annual honor to represent the highest recognition given by the ANA and named it the Farran Zerbe Award. It seems that the Board was completely unaware of various shenanigans that Zerbe was involved in during the earlier part of the century.

ADVENTURE NO. 25

DARING TO BE DIFFERENT
THE 1943 STEEL CENT

The zinc-coated 1943 Lincoln cent, minted at Philadelphia, Denver, and San Francisco, was intended to permit the usual cent alloy, bronze, to be used for strategic and military purposes during this central year of World War II.

* * *

A Cent with a Difference

In notable contrast to the aforementioned Revolutionary War medal, this little "adventure" features not a great rarity, but a very historical coin which can be purchased in "nice" condition for just a dollar or two. And yet, it is unique in the annals of American numismatics. Along with details on the coin itself I serve up some history of the era (did you expect anything different?)....

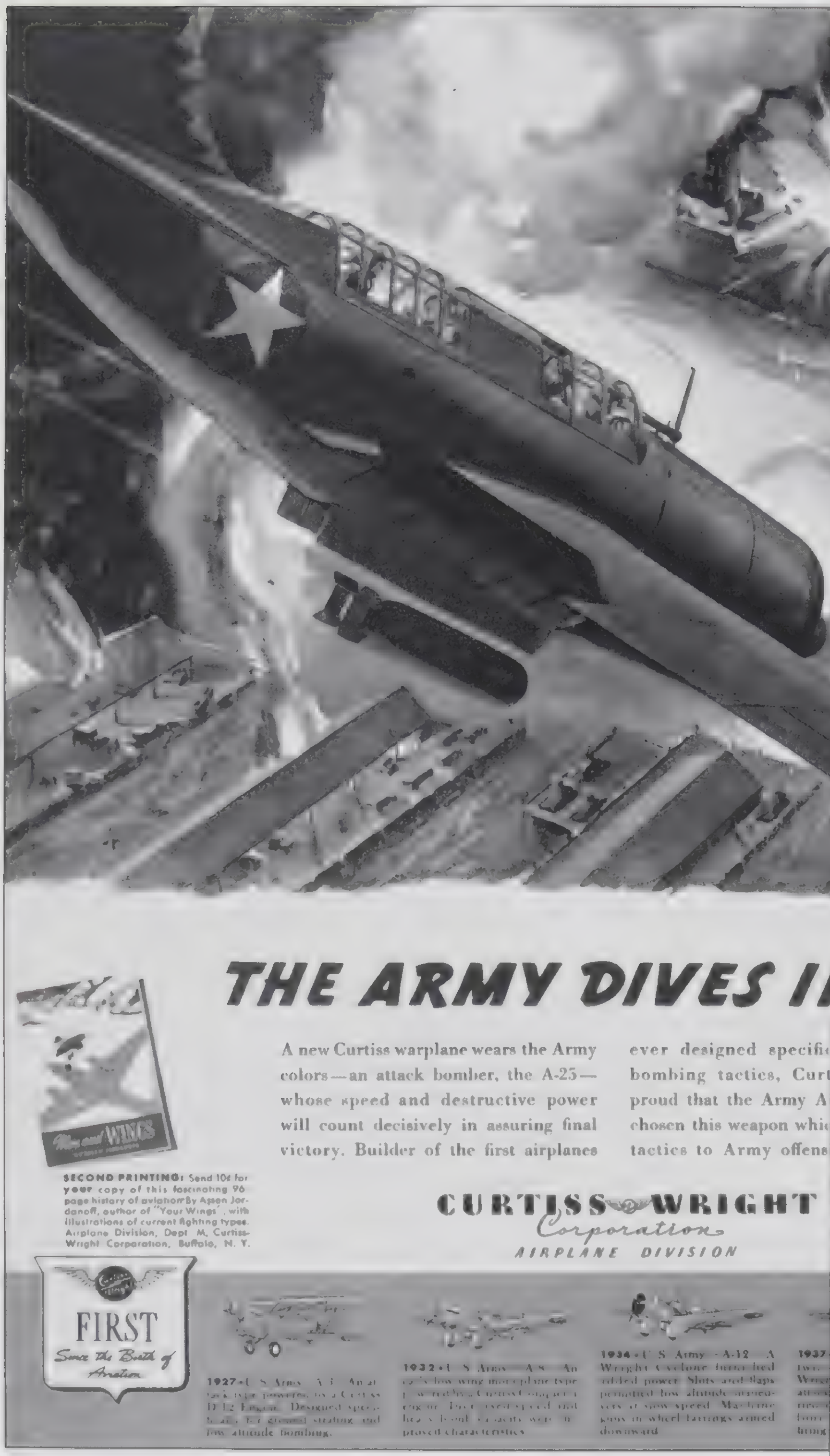
Ever since the spring of 1864, the standard composition for one-cent pieces had been bronze, a composition mostly of copper with small amounts of tin and zinc. Indian Head cents from 1864 to 1909 were made of this alloy as were Lincoln cents from 1909 onward (to 1982).

Now it was 1943. America had been at war with the German Nazis, the Italian forces of Benito Mussolini, and the minions of Japanese Emperor Hirohito since December 1941, and played a supportive role with Great Britain even before that time.

At the three United States mints coinage totals were at a record high, spurred by the needs of an inflationary economy in which money was common and goods were scarce. Seeking to concentrate on the wartime effort and also the home front, the Treasury Department made several changes. Proof coins, made for collectors each year, were discontinued in 1942. Such frivolities could be put off for the present. Nickel, a strategic material in short supply, was removed as a component for the five-cent piece and replaced with a new alloy including silver—the latter metal being in great abundance (federal stockpiles were high and hundreds of millions of silver dollars were stored in Treasury vaults).

In 1942 attention was given to replacing the bronze cent. Pairs of test dies for a cent-size medalet were sent to several different makers of metals and plastics, and experiments were conducted. Finally, in 1943 it was decided that cents would be made of steel discs or planchets coated with zinc to give them a lustrous surface. The plan was put in place, and over a billion such coins were made:

Philadelphia Mint: 684,628,670
Denver Mint: 217,660,000
San Francisco Mint: 191,550,000



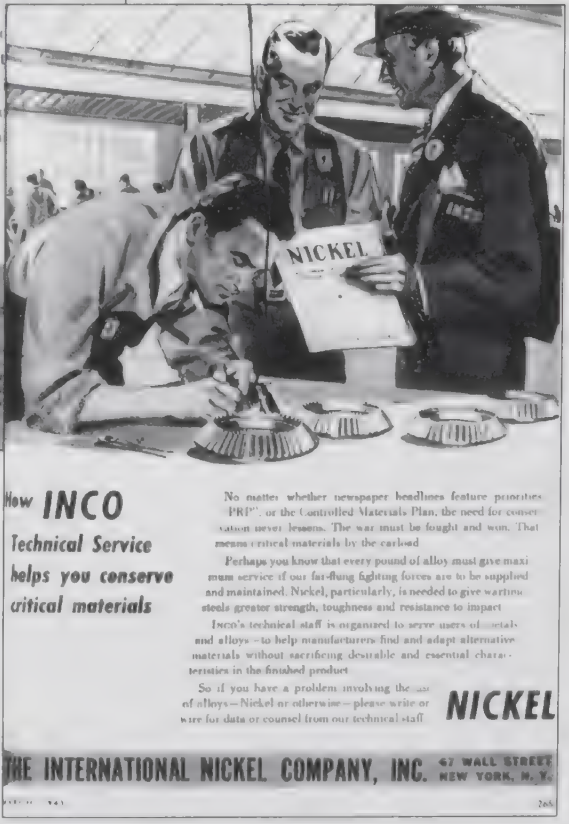
THE ARMY DIVES IN!

A new Curtiss warplane wears the Army colors—an attack bomber, the A-25—whose speed and destructive power will count decisively in assuring final victory. Builder of the first airplanes ever designed specifi… bombing tactics, Curt… proud that the Army A… chosen this weapon whic… tactics to Army offens…

SECOND PRINTING: Send 10¢ for your copy of this fascinating 96 page history of aviation By Assen Jordanoff, author of "Your Wings", with illustrations of current fighting types. Airplane Division, Dept M, Curtiss-Wright Corporation, Buffalo, N. Y.

CURTISS WRIGHT Corporation
AIRPLANE DIVISION

Advertisement published by Curtiss Wright in 1943. At the time, America's full effort was concentrated on winning the war, and certain metals—including copper and nickel—were in especially strong demand, causing a rearrangement of coinage priorities. Copper was eliminated from the one-cent piece in 1943, and from 1942 through 1945, nickel was not used in the five-cent piece. (*Aero Digest*, March 1943)



How INCO Technical Service helps you conserve critical materials

No matter whether newspaper headlines feature priorities PRP", or the Controlled Materials Plan, the need for conservation never lessens. The war must be fought and won. That means critical materials by the carload

Perhaps you know that every pound of alloy must give maximum service if our far-flung fighting forces are to be supplied and maintained. Nickel, particularly, is needed to give wartime steels greater strength, toughness and resistance to impact

Inco's technical staff is organized to serve users of metals and alloys—to help manufacturers find and adapt alternative materials without sacrificing desirable and essential characteristics in the finished product

So if you have a problem involving the use of alloys—Nickel or otherwise—please write or wire for data or counsel from our technical staff

NICKEL

THE INTERNATIONAL NICKEL COMPANY, INC. 67 WALL STREET NEW YORK, N. Y.

Advertisement published by the International Nickel Company in 1943. At the time most available supplies of this somewhat scarce metal were directed to the war effort. From late 1942 through and including 1945, nickel was eliminated from five-cent pieces, and an alloy containing silver was substituted. (*Aero Digest*, March 1943)

The mints encountered great difficulties with the hardness of the steel planchets. Further, when released into circulation the cents quickly became spotted and stained, in a word, *ugly*.

In 1944 the mints went back to a copper alloy made from recycled shell cases and other copper materials, thus isolating the 1943 cents as curiosities in the spectrum of American numismatics.

Returning to Copper

The December 1943 issue of *The Numismatist* noted that resumption of copper alloy for cent coinage would begin at an early date. Further:

> The new alloy will contain slightly less copper and slightly more zinc than the peacetime formula, but the coin will be quite similar in appearance to the traditional cent. It will work satisfactorily in vending machines, being just lighter in weight than the standard bronze, and a trifle heavier than the steel substitute.
>
> Mrs. Nellie Tayloe Ross, Director of the Mint, said that experiments recently conducted with the recovered shell cases and added virgin copper proved the alloy satisfactory for coinage. Treasury officials and officials of the War Production Board have been collaborating for several weeks in working out details of the allotment of sufficient copper, including the scrap shells, to permit return to the copper-alloy coin....
>
> The Mint will use as a base for the new cents small arms cartridge cases recovered by military authorities from proving grounds, firing ranges and other training areas for troops. These cases consist of 70% copper and 30% zinc, and if melted down with enough virgin copper to bring the copper content up to 85% or 90%, the alloy is adaptable to coinage.
>
> The former bronze coin consisted of 95% copper and 5% zinc and tin. The amount of copper needed will be about half that required for the all-virgin copper alloy. The Mint project will have an important place in the salvage of war-wasted materials.
>
> When zinc coated steel was adopted for the one-cent piece it was the only metal obtainable for the purpose. Arms plants were facing shutdowns because of the metal scarcity. The War Production Board had withdrawn an allotment of copper to the Mint. Coins of zinc, coins of plastics and coins of all sorts of alloys and materials were considered, and ruled out in turn as consuming critical items in the military economy. Meantime, demand for coins continued at an unprecedented rate. The cent of low carbon steel, coated with zinc to prevent rust was specified with the approval of Treasury Secretary Morgenthau and Donald M. Nelson, chairman of the War Production Board, after the Congress had passed permissive legislation at the end of 1942.

The zinc-coated steel Lincoln cents minted in 1943 remained common in circulation for years afterward. I recall that in 1952-3 when I became acquainted with coin collecting it was common for merchants and citizens to keep a cigar box or other container in which to toss steel cents when they were found. By that time most were dull gray and not at all attractive.

In the late 1950s, or perhaps it was the early 1960s, someone developed a procedure for "processing" these ugly pieces and making them fairly bright and attractive—normally a numismatic no-no, but in this instance acceptable to most of the collecting community as long as they were described as "processed."

Perhaps of all of the numismatic souvenirs of World War II, the steel cents of 1943 are the most distinctive and ubiquitous today. Here is a highly affordable coin that anyone can own easily.

Some Military Events of 1943

In the theatres of war American soldiers, sailors, and aviators were in combat in many areas, efforts that in 1943 were the beginning of significant victories against the Axis powers (Germany, Italy, and Japan) by the Allies (the United States, England, and many other free nations, with the Soviet Union, formerly on the side of the Nazis, being somewhat of a latecomer).

In the Pacific Ocean, Gen. Douglas MacArthur, who fled Corregidor the year before, sought to turn the tide, which had been running against the United States, to victory by gaining bases and footholds on islands near Japan, to eventually permit bombing and invasion of the homeland. On February 19, the Japanese resistance at Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands ended after six months of bloody fighting. In time, the Americans constructed an airfield there.

From England, American B-17s and B-24s and British Lancaster bombers and other aircraft raided the European continent, still firmly under the control of Adolf Hitler. In the summer thousands of planes laid waste to many German factories, towns, and cities, including seven square miles of Hamburg in a raging firestorm which created a pillar of fire over two miles high. In the meantime, German land forces, which had endured starvation and worse during the bitter winter of 1942-3, surrendered at Stalingrad. Little sympathy was felt for the German sufferers. The horrors of the Nazi destruction of the Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto the same year were not widely known at the time, part of the "final solution" from Hitler's demented mind, the gory details of which would not be publicized until after the war. After more than 55,000 Jews were killed in Warsaw, Heinrich Himmler decreed that all other Jewish ghettos should be destroyed. Insanity and inhumanity prevailed at the highest levels of the German command.

In Italy, Americans mounted an amphibious landing at Anzio. One event led to another, and in the summer dictator Benito Mussolini resigned and went into exile, although for a brief time he managed a puppet government under the direction of Hitler's minions. By year's end, Italy was no longer a major factor in the war.

The British captured Field Marshal Rommel's forces in North Africa, and 150,000 Nazi troops surrendered. The spread of Nazi control was checked. Prepared for American troops in the North African campaign were "barter kits," which contained gold coins, scissors, beads, candy, sugar, tea, coffee, and clothing, intended to be exchanged with natives as gifts and for payments. As United States gold coins were no longer available, having been melted on a wholesale basis circa 1937, British and related pieces were obtained from Canadian sources.[1] Such kits, of varying sizes, were also made up for pilots and others in the service in various areas of action.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt met (in Casablanca, North Africa) with British Prime Minister Winston Churchill to formulate future strategy. Gen. Charles de Gaulle also participated, although France was occupied by the Nazis. It was agreed that the victors would demand unconditional surrender from the aggressors. However, for the time being that was a long way off. In theatres in the autumn the film *Casablanca*, produced on a soundstage in California, starring Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman, thrilled audiences and presented a Hollywood view of spies and intrigue.

At year's end on December 24, President Roosevelt appointed Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower to lead the invasion planned to retake the European continent.

By this point in my *More Adventures* book you've come to expect a few diversions, and for the present topic here they are:

Further Numismatic Considerations of 1943

The Higgy Sale

On the home front, "win the war" was the overwhelming consideration, and all efforts—coin minting and otherwise—were made in this direction. Many if not most eligible male numismatists were on the battle lines or playing supporting roles. Activity remained intense on the domestic collecting scene, but with fewer participants.

In a war-oriented economy, cash was plentiful and consumer goods were scarce. There were few if any automobiles, appliances, and other big-ticket manufactured items in showrooms. Thus, discretionary funds, such as they were, went to other things—including rare coins. The market was strong, and prices experienced a strong run-up. Veteran dealer Abe Kosoff was fond of relating in later years that the jumping-off point for the action was his offering of the Michael F. Higgy Collection at auction in New York City, September 10-11, 1943. Many choice and rare coins, and not-so-rare ones as well, sold for two, three, five, or more times the prices in the latest edition of Wayte Raymond's *Standard Catalogue* (which since its debut in 1934 had become the standard arbiter of coin values).

To Abe, the twentieth-century American coin market was divided into two sections: before Higgy and after Higgy. Years later, in 1979, after my company sold the first section of the Garrett Collection for The Johns Hopkins University, and the world of coin prices was turned upside down when many pieces sold for multiples of catalogue values, he called to tell me that the event reminded him of the Higgy sale, updated. I was very honored to hear this.

Advice to Collectors

In *The Numismatist* in January 1943, Brad Mills, a well-known Texas collector, contributed this philosophy, much of which is just as relevant today as it was when it was printed:

> COIN COLLECTING AS A HOBBY AND INVESTMENT
>
> **Buying Strategy**
>
> As the coin collector goes along he slowly realizes that he must exercise both common sense and caution while adding to his collection. When a beautiful, rare coin is offered to us it is very hard to pass it up, although we feel the price may be a little high. In the average run of medium rarities it might be well to realize that such coins are like street cars—another one will come along.
>
> The eager hobbyist who builds his collection too rapidly is likely to sacrifice sound investment features. In his eagerness to complete a "run" or to obtain a maximum number of rarities in short order, he may purchase many coins above the average market.
>
> When a coin, or a series of coins is rapidly advancing, the tendency is to jump in and purchase somewhere near the top. We do this in an effort to supply our needs before prices advance still further. Unless we are dealing with rarities, a marked reaction may take place, and we find our investment is not so good after all.

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[1] *The Numismatist*, March 1943, drawing upon information from *Newsweek* magazine.

The serious hobbyist soon learns that the buying and selling of coins at correct prices are essential to the investment phase of this diversion. He will do well to look over his collection from time to time and take stock of the prices paid and of current values. In this way he can capitalize on whatever mistakes he has made, both in price and in series.

Diversification

Diversification is the very heart of coin collecting, unless one particular series you happen to concentrate on becomes a best-seller. In carefully checking back over 10 or 12 different series, records will show that five or six have about held their own in value, three or four have declined sharply, and three or four have advanced materially. The average for all of these lots over a 10- or 20-year period will take care of the collector who used judgment in his original selections.

A close study of prices realized for large private coin collections at auction sales discloses many interesting trends in coin values. In a typical collection built up over a 50-year period, many items bring four times their original cost, while others sell for considerably less than their cost of 20 or 30 years ago. This is often true, although the entire collection may bring twice as much as it cost. These contrasting fluctuations prove that it is difficult to choose consistently only those coins that will steadily enhance in value.

To be more specific, it would be well to observe that large United States cents, some of the old half dollars, and many of the early medium rarities are selling for no more than they brought 40 years ago. On the other hand, many of the more recent rarities are commanding two and three times as much as they brought even 10 years ago. These contrasts indicate that the average hobbyist should use as much balance as possible in the selection of his collection....

Investment Success

From a pure investment standpoint coin collecting is one of the best of all hobbies. Any coin collection bought carefully over a 20-year period should guarantee the collector from 80% to 150% of his original investment. Many items may depreciate slightly in value, but other items will more than make up for the deficit.

The experienced collector recognizes that he may not be able to realize his full purchase price in case he is forced to sell coins recently acquired. If his coins were purchased at the right prices, however, he should expect to receive from 75% to 95% of his original purchase price. Where coins are sold a few years after their purchase, the hobbyist may realize even more than his original purchase price through natural appreciation.

The Simon-pure collector who takes the hobby very seriously often makes price a secondary consideration. This is the serious minded person who usually goes in for the greater rarities and elaborate types available. In spite of his desire to obtain coins at any cost, this type of collector often comes out on top, because of his natural desire to obtain only fine or rare items. Seemingly exorbitant prices paid today for very rare coins may prove to be the modest prices of tomorrow.

The dealer plays an important part in the coin collecting experience of any hobbyist, and it is well for the collector to know and do business with responsible dealers. Any reliable dealer will be fair with the coin collector, and necessarily has a much greater knowledge of coins than the average hobbyist. Most of the dealers were at the beginning ordinary collectors, and they know both sides of the picture.

Study is Key to Enjoyment

Not one collector in 10 gives enough time to numismatic literature. The greatest enjoyment is derived from any hobby through a genuine knowledge and appreciation of it. The collector should not only know the values of various coins, but he should also know something of their history and significance. Many of our coins, particularly the commemorative series, are rich in historical background. It is only through an actual study of the various series that the greatest enjoyment can be derived from coin collecting as a hobby.

The enjoyment angle of coin collecting certainly should be as important as the desire to keep the collection on a self-sustaining basis. As the collector becomes older and more experienced, he also should become more critical and more appreciative.

Getting Started

It is much better to start collecting in a modest way than to rush headlong into the hobby, even though the beginner has a large amount of money available. By easing into this diversion it is simple for the amateur to learn as he goes along. The person who suddenly becomes interested in coins as a hobby certainly should not attempt to corner the market because he has a nice amount of ready cash on hand.

It is well to study the action of the coin market during the last depression. Prices did slump sharply between 1930 and 1935, but they held up much better than real estate, diamond and miscellaneous art values.

Tastes differ so much among coin collectors that it is impossible to offer any set plan for a collection of coins. One person will become greatly attached to coins of a certain series, while another person will follow along an entirely different line of thought.

Changing Tastes and Desires

For some mysterious reason, the tastes and desires of every collector change from time to time. In the beginning he will enthuse over gold dollars, old half dollars and three dollar gold pieces. He simply cannot get enough of them.

In a few years he gets more finicky and the old half dollars lose their charm. He wants finer and rarer materials, and starts talking of Stellas and Uncirculated rarities. He jumps from one series to another, all the while becoming more critical with his increased knowledge of coins. Perhaps he tires of the same old faces.

> The collector who tries to get as many types as possible seems to derive more enjoyment from the hobby than the collector who has a mania for obtaining every date in any one series.
>
> The United States $3 gold series is a notable example of one lacking variety. All three dollar gold pieces were minted from similar dies, and this fact probably accounts for the low selling prices of several medium rare dates.
>
> One collector I know who seems to derive greatest enjoyment from this hobby has type sets in almost every United States series, plus every odd or unusual coin he can get from all over the world. He has fractional currency and the large United States currency of almost every type. For the past 20 years he has been obtaining directly from the mints or from Federal Reserve banks every new silver, nickel and bronze coin for each year. Many of these small coins are now worth several times their face value, particularly in the case of Uncirculated cents, nickels and dimes.
>
> The collector who observes the rules of fair play, attempts to balance his interests between hobby and investment instincts, and tries to learn more each year about coins is the true lamp-bearer who will do much to perpetuate the hobby.[1]

Numismatics a Science?

In June 1943 in *The Numismatist,* Editor Burton H. Saxton pondered, the question, "Is numismatics a science?" He related that it had been designated as a science for many years, but that some considered the term inappropriate. Burton stated that numismatics as a science "seems more firmly established today than ever before."

Various definitions of science were quoted, including: "Science is systematized knowledge considered in reference to the study or understanding of truth," "any branch or department of systematized knowledge," and "accumulated accepted knowledge systematized and formulated with reference to the discovery of general truths or the operation of general laws; classified knowledge."

"While the scientific aspect of numismatics appeals to some readers, others will enjoy the relaxation, the satisfaction of possessing coins in exceptional condition or of exceptional rarity, and the other pleasures of the hobby," Saxton wrote.

Years later in the 1970s, someone, whose name fortunately escapes me, came up with the idea that numismatics is an *industry.* By most dictionaries, the main definition refers to some enterprise that *manufactures* something, such as this entry in the *Random House Dictionary:*

> The aggregate of manufacturing or technically productive enterprises in a particular field, often named after its principal product: *the automobile industry; the steel industry.*

Per this definition, those who make counterfeit coins are, indeed, in the *coin industry,* as are, perhaps, various mints. However, as a rare coin dealer and numismatist who enjoys the *art* and *science* of the field, I refuse to consider myself to be an industrialist!

Among the Dealers

In the coin hobby, or artistic endeavor, or science, or whatever it was or is, in 1943 interest was intense, building toward the price-rush described by Abe Kosoff for his Higgy Sale at summer's end. Also in New York City, Hans M.F. Schulman was busy dealing in coins, having come to America in 1938 as a representative of his family's long-time numismatic business in Amsterdam, Holland. Tragically, most of Schulman's relatives remaining in Europe would be killed by the Nazis.

Stack's, a coin store operated by Joseph and Morton Stack, launched the *Numismatic Review,* billed as "A Scientific Digest Pertaining to Coins, Medals and Paper Money." Thomas Ollive Mabbott occupied the editor's chair. The same firm was soon to announce that Benjamin J. Stack, son of Joseph, would join as a partner.

The New Netherlands Coin Company, under the aegis of Moritz Wormser, was also busy in New York with a prime location at 95 Fifth Avenue. Wayte Raymond, an old-timer on the scene, continued to publish the *Standard Catalogue* and a magazine, *The Coin Collector's Journal,* while selling his popular "National" albums and, to a selected clientele, scarce and rare coins.

All around New York, collectors and dealers were agog with the latest discovery, the 1942/1 overdate Mercury dime. Several token-sellers in the subway system, Herbert Tobias, Morris Moscow, Max Kaplan among them, each found quite a few—and used the opportunity to leave the underground and become in the daylight rare coin dealers, soon gaining excellent reputations.

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[1] I made the acquaintance of Brad in the 1950s when he welcomed me to Dallas and invited me to lunch at the Petroleum Club, with which he was associated. He introduced me to several different "oil men" who liked to collect coins. At the time, collecting oil wells and collecting coins seemed to go hand-in-hand. John Murrell, active in the affairs of DeGolyer & MacNaughton, the international drilling firm, was an avid collector, and Bob Schermerhorn was a collector and dealer. Amon Carter, Jr., in nearby Fort Worth, traced his family fortune to oil. A decade later, Harry W. Bass, Jr., also with an oil-based fortune, entered numismatics. Perhaps the common thread is that discovering oil and discovering the excitement of owning rare coins are similar emotions.

Way down in Fort Worth, Texas, tireless dealer B. Max Mehl was busy selling his *Star Rare Coin Encyclopedia* and seeking to buy at least one 1913 Liberty Head nickel. In a headline he boasted, "Claims are easily made, but more difficult to fulfill!" He went on to say the following: "I do not 'claim' (but do) pay the highest cash prices for single coins or entire collections, as is evidenced by the fact that collections, most of all that are offered, from New York to California, find their resting place here in my office!"

In San Antonio, Texas, Norman Brock maintained a nice stock of "collector coins," including quantities of certain semi-scarce Lincoln cents such as 1922-D and 1931-S. In El Paso, L.W. Hoffecker, who in 1935-6 had distributed the Old Spanish Trail and Elgin Centennial commemorative half dollars (see Adventure No. 15), traded as the Watkins Coin Company. In Salt Lake City, Norman J. Shultz specialized in Morgan silver dollars—and would live long enough (until his death at the age of 95 on June 6, 1988) to see these become America's most popular nineteenth-century numismatic series.

In Chicago, Aubrey and Adeline Bebee enjoyed their reputation for attentive customer service and good quality. In the same city Charles E. Green, trading under his wife's name, R. Green, handled many rarities (and would soon be selling the particular rarity which forms the subject of Adventure No. 20 in this book). Also in Chicago, Lee F. Hewitt's *Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine* was published, the largest circulation periodical in the hobby. In the summer it was announced that he would be inducted into the armed service, and members of the Chicago Coin Club wished him well.

Meanwhile, in February an advertisement by the Hollinbeck Stamp & Coin Co. stated: "Uncle Sam Has Priorities: A.M. Kagin is in the Army, and I, Paul Kagin, am now following him. We wish to thank all our friends and customers who have made possible the growth of our firm. Looking forward to resuming our pleasant relations once more in a free world, we are—Yours for Victory."

Milferd H. Bolender, an Illinois schoolteacher who conducted rare coin auctions in his spare time, continued to turn out a stream of mail bid sales. In Ohio, Ted and Carl Brandts were just beginning to create a lot of attention by handling rarities, trading as the Celina Coin Company. However, their fame was fleeting, and a few years later they were scarcely heard of in the trade.

In Boston, Malcolm O.E. Chell-Frost did an active business, mostly in medium-priced coins, as did Maurice M. Gould and, separately, Harold E. Whiteneck, among others. The city had been a focal point for numismatic interest for a long time, indeed since the 1850s, when Jeremiah Colburn and others were among America's pioneer numismatic scholars.

In Troy, New York, French's, operated by Charles French under his wife's name, A. [Arline] French, ran a hobby shop that included a lively coin section. In Cincinnati, Sol Kaplan ran an active dealership and was particularly interested in the investment aspect of coins and Fred O. Koch specialized in commemoratives, while not far away, in Dayton, James F. Kelly sold coins and jewelry. Frank J. Katen, of Milford, Connecticut, advertised widely. William L. Pukall, a New Jersey dealer who began business just before World War I, sold coins from his vast holdings, rich in Hard Times tokens, Matte Proofs of the 1909-1916 era, and other series.

King Farouk

In New England, Howard E. MacIntosh operated a mass-marketing firm which sold coins, albums, and accessories, and did much to promote the hobby. In January 1943, this communication to his company was printed in *Hobbies* magazine:

> The Tatham Stamp & Coin Co., Springfield, Mass., opened a letter from Egypt lately. A private secretary to His Majesty, 22-year-old King Farouk, placed an order for a collection of American coins for the king's collection. The coins were delivered to Lawrence Steinhardt, United States ambassador to Turkey, who took them by clipper plane and delivered them personally to the king on a recent trip.

In 1943 Farouk was given an honorary membership in the American Numismatic Association, although what, if anything, he did for the ANA is not known. Probably, they simply traded on his name and fame—as sometimes happens with honors and awards. He was, however, the prime customer of certain rare coin dealers, most notably in 1943 Hans M.F. Schulman and Abe Kosoff. In time he assembled vast holdings of coins, stamps, jewelry, pornography, and other interests and became known as the Playboy King. A military junta tossed him off of his throne in 1952, and his collection was auctioned in early 1954 *in absentia* at Koubbeh Palace in Cairo.

In Rochester, New York, John J. Pittman, born in 1913 and in the 1940s an employee of Eastman Kodak, began to collect coins in a serious manner and joined the ANA in 1943—laying the foundation for what would become one of America's most important cabinets.[1] In 1954 Pittman would join Abe Kosoff, Sol Kaplan, Ambassador and Mrs. R. Henry Norweb, Hans M.F. Schulman, James P. Randall, Robert Schermerhorn, Paul Wittlin, Gaston DiBello, and Maurice Storck as American attendees at the Farouk sale.

In 1943 the American Numismatic Society, New York, published Sydney P. Noe's important study, *New England and Willow Tree Coinages*. In the same year the Whitman Publishing Company, in Racine, Wisconsin, announced a new series of coin folders with three panels arranged to fold together with a blue cover. Whitman's *Handbook of U.S. Coins*, a buying guide written by Richard S. Yeoman, was widely sold through hobby shops.[2] Perhaps a twinkle in Yeoman's eye was the *Guide Book of U.S. Coins*, which would make its debut a few years later in 1946. In 1943 Yeoman was just beginning to become well known in numismatics. In January *The Numismatist* carried his article, "The Most Famous Lincoln Cent," which told of the controversy surrounding the V.D.B. initials in 1909.[3]

Paper Money

The September 1943 issue of *The Numismatist* began with an article, "Recent Changes In Our Paper Currency," by Robert H. Lloyd. Described were the HAWAII overprints and the yellow seal issues made for North Africa. It was reported that HAWAII notes could be used in the Hawaiian Islands only and could not be exported to or used on the mainland, under penalty of a heavy fine. The North African notes were likewise elusive, for "there seems to have been a reluctance on the part of the Treasury to allow these notes to escape in the hands of the people. Collectors will do well to turn up every available specimen by inquiry from soldiers and bankers."

Lloyd went on to describe changes among other notes as well as releases into circulation of notes produced in the early 1930s but stored by the Treasury since that time. Although a handful of people collected federal paper money, the series was largely moribund in the absence of popular reference guides. Robert Friedberg's pivotal *United States Paper Money* would not make its debut until a decade later, and the formation of the Society of Paper Money Collectors was even further away on the calendar. Nor were there any periodicals on this aspect of the hobby. To be *dynamic*, a numismatic specialty must have all of these things—plus convenient albums and display items. Lacking such, the paper money specialty remained asleep.

What interest there was in currency was primarily concentrated on large-size "type" notes, Fractional Currency, broken bank notes, and Confederate paper, with scarcely an inkling of demand for National Bank notes.

The most significant holding of federal paper money in private hands was owned by Albert A. Grinnell, the retired owner of a chain of Detroit music stores, Grinnell Brothers, which had prospered with the sale of pianos, phonographs, radios, and other entertainment and music items in the 1920s, but which had fallen on hard times in the Depression.

In 1943 Grinnell dipped his toe into the selling waters and consigned a large group of rare coins to B. Max Mehl, to be presented in a mail bid catalogue dated June 15. Included were a complete set of gold dollars by date and mint, a set of the four 1879-1880 $4 coins, a beautiful collection of Fractional Currency, and some paper money of note, a prelude to a major offering through Mehl. However, Grinnell was so dissatisfied that his main collection of currency was soon consigned to Barney Bluestone instead.

Bluestone, who did business in Syracuse, New York, offered the Grinnell Collection in Parts I through VII, extending from November 25, 1944, to November 30, 1946. Uncut sheets of National and other bank notes, double-denomination issues, serial number 1 notes, and other treasures crossed the block, generally to an apathetic reception, as currency had not shared in the run-up in prices and interest that coins had experienced. Bill Donlon recalled that "only six or seven bidders were in attendance each time. Fred Boyd, Jim Wade, Richard Safflin, Harley Freeman, and Herman Crofoot were in Bill's company."[4] The catalogues are believed to have been compiled by Billy Sunday.[5]

In time, the yellow-seal North Africa notes and the HAWAII overprints would become quite popular with collectors. The restrictions against owning such pieces seem to have been quietly dropped at an early time.

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[1] After his death, February 17, 1997, his collection was catalogued in detail and brought to the auction block in a series of sales conducted by David W. Akers.

[2] Yeoman was the *nom de plume* for Richard S. Yeo.

[3] Yeoman died on November 9, 1988, by which time he was widely recognized as a grand figure in the rare coin hobby. By then, Kenneth E. Bressett had succeeded to the post of editor of the *Guide Book*.

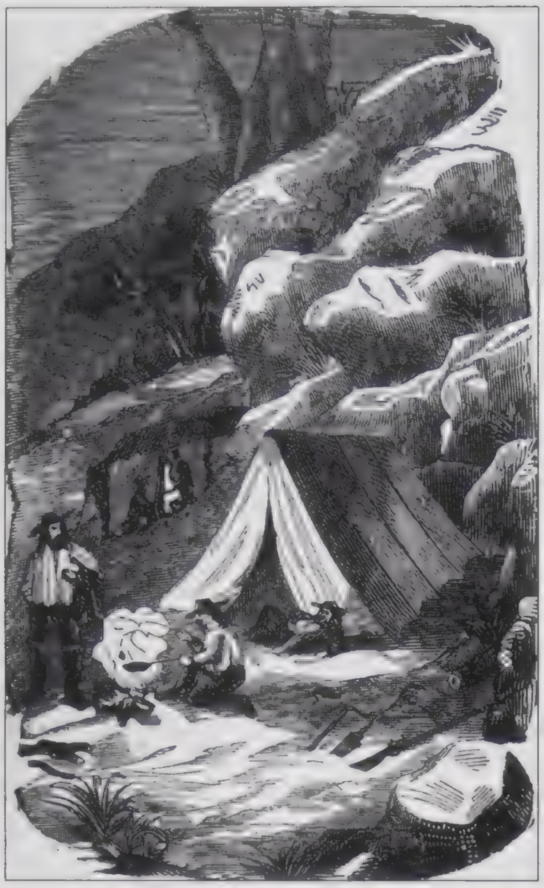
[4] *Abe Kosoff Remembers*, Chapter 134 (May 12, 1971), a feature about Donlon.

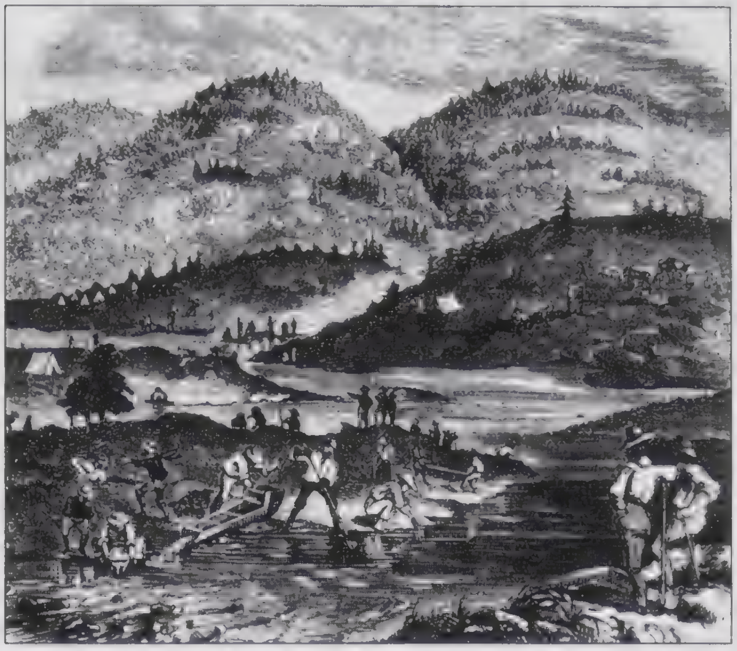
[5] Cf. Charles Davis, Armand Champa Library I, Lot 94.

Collecting World War II Coins

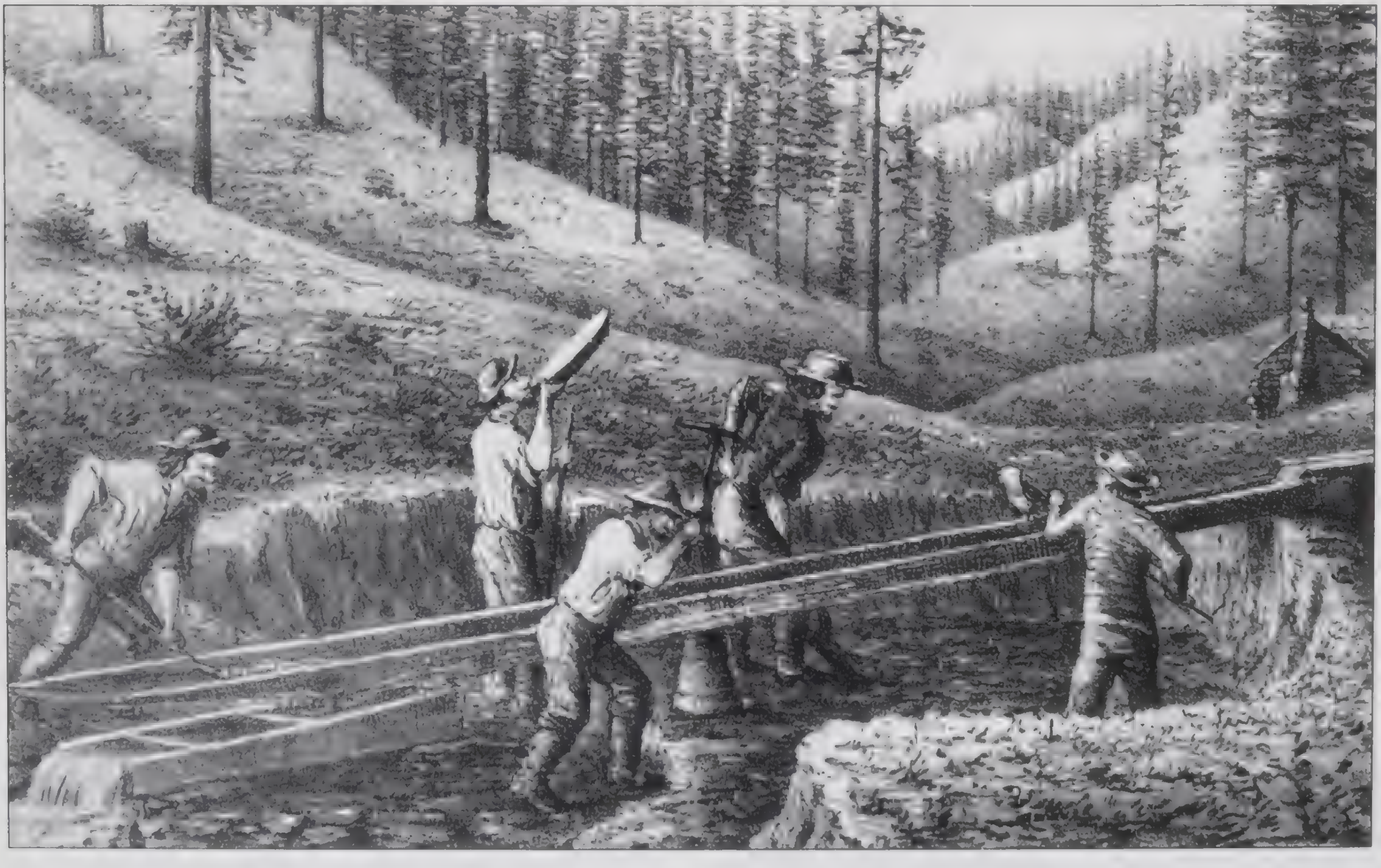
Today, there is not a great deal of specific interest in the collecting of World War II coinage, probably because these fit in easily with other coins in their own series, although the 1943 zinc-coated steel cents, the 1944-5 shell-case copper alloy cents, and the 1942-1945 silver-content five-cent pieces are quite distinctive.

As has often been the case in wartime, mintages were quite large. Thus, today there are no particularly rare coins among regular issue 1941-1945 Lincoln cents, Jefferson nickels, Mercury dimes, Washington quarters, or Liberty Walking half dollars. Perhaps if someone were to market an album or display case for these pieces, they would be collected accordingly. Certainly, there is no lack of history to go with the pieces!





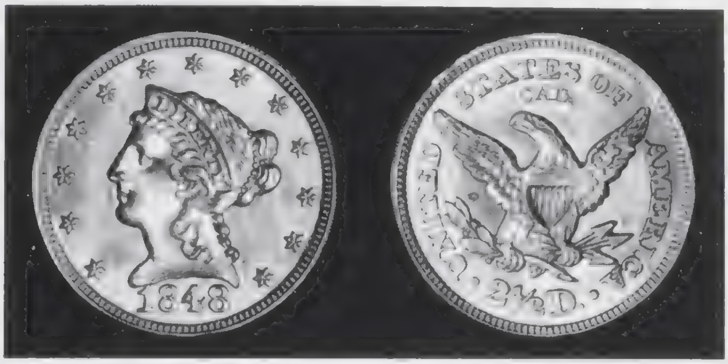
Scenes of gold mining on a California river. By the summer of 1848 such scenes were typical in the foothills of the Sierras as fortune seekers each attempted to make a "pile." (Clockwise from left: J.M. Letts *California Illustrated*, *Annals of San Francisco*, the archives of Ken Rendell)



ADVENTURE NO. 26

DIRECT FROM THE GOLD RUSH: THE 1848 CAL. $2.50

The First Commemorative



In December 1848 a deposit of gold from California was brought to the Mint, representing the first substantial official shipment of this precious metal from the Gold Rush. It was coined into an estimated 1,389 $2.50 pieces, each stamped on the reverse with CAL. to indicate its significance.

* * *

Gold on the American River!

Although gold had been found in California for many years before January 24, 1848, on that day James Marshall, an employee of John Sutter, spotted gold flecks in the race of a sawmill he was helping to construct at Coloma on the American River. Soon additional deposits were discovered up and down the river, and the area attracted dozens, then hundreds of miners. Word soon spread further, and by autumn 1848 newspapers in the East contained many articles on the alluring prospect of becoming rich overnight.

The Gold Rush had begun!

In November 1848 several ships left the East to go to San Francisco. By December a veritable stampede was in progress. Old schooners, transport steamers, and virtually any other vessels considered remotely seaworthy were pressed into service. Between December 14, 1848, and January 1849, 61 ships with an average of 50 passengers each left Boston, Salem, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Norfolk. Additional vessels left from Charleston, New Orleans, and other ports.

Interest in gold had been fueled by President James Knox Polk's annual address in December 1848 and by news of the arrival of gold at the Philadelphia Mint in the same month. The first deposit in 1848 of California gold from the American River was given to the Philadelphia Mint by David Carter on December 8th for evaluation. Mint Director Robert M. Patterson reported in due course that the gold, amounting to 1,804.59 ounces, assayed at slightly over $18 per ounce.

On December 9th, the following day, 228 ounces averaging .894 fine were deposited at the Philadelphia Mint from gold sent by R.B. Mason, Jr., in California. This unrefined metal had been purchased at the bargain rate of $10 per ounce (pure gold was worth $17.15 net per ounce at the Mint) by an army quartermaster in California under the sanction of the acting governor, using money from a civil fund. This gold was transmitted from California with a letter dated August 17, 1848, via a messenger, Lt. L. Loeser. When Loeser arrived at the trading port of New Orleans on November 24th on his way to Washington, the *Commercial Times* of that city printed an account that attracted wide interest among citizens.

When Loeser subsequently arrived in the capital, *The Washington Union* informed readers of the following:

> We readily admit that the account so nearly approached the miraculous that we were relieved by the evidence of our own senses on the subject. The specimens have all the appearance of the native gold we had seen from the mines of North Carolina and Virginia; and we are informed that the Secretary will send the small chest of gold to the Mint, to be melted into coin and bars, and most of it to be subsequently fashioned into medals commemorative of the heroism and valor of our officers.
>
> Several of the other specimens he will retain for the present in the War Office as found in California in the form of lumps, scales, and sand; the last named being of different hues, from bright yellow to black, without much appearance of gold. However skeptical any man may have been, we defy him to doubt that if the quantity of such specimens as these be as great as has been represented, the value of gold in California must be greater than has been hitherto discovered in the old or new continent; and great as may be the immigration to this new El Dorado, the frugal and industrious will be amply repaid for their enterprise and toil.

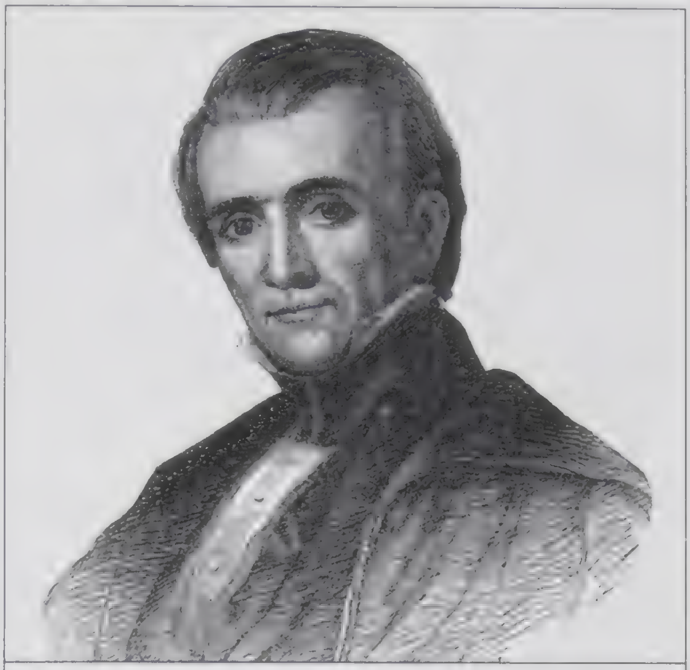
Special Coins Authorized

Secretary of War W.L. Marcy wrote the following to Mint Director Patterson on December 8, 1848, concerning the first official government deposit of 228 ounces, which subsequently arrived via Lt. Loeser on December 9th:

> If the metal is found to be pure gold, as I doubt not that it will be, I request you to reserve enough of it for two medals ordered by Congress and not yet completed, and the remainder, with the exception of one or two small bars, I wish to have coined and sent with the bars to this department.
>
> As many may wish to procure specimens made with California gold, by exchanging other coin for it, I would suggest that it be made into quarter eagles with a distinguishing mark on each, if any variation from the ordinary issues from the Mint would be proper and could be conveniently made....

Nothing was heard from the Mint, and Marcy inquired concerning the progress of the coinage. On January 5, 1849, Mint Director Patterson replied:

> The amount of your deposit of gold, made on the 15th ult., is now ready for delivery in California gold. It is our practice to pay for deposits as soon as their value is ascertained; but this could not be done in the present case because payment was required in coins made of the bullion deposited.
>
> Before the Cal. gold could be used it had to undergo the process of *parting* in order to separate it from the excess of silver which it contains. This was one source of delay. Another occurred by the time required for stamping the letters CAL. on the quarter-eagles as you desired. Your payment of $3,910.10 will be made up of $3,474.64 in coins and $435.46 in two bars of gold as melted from the grains. The California gold reserved for the medals is from another deposit....



President James Knox Polk (shown above) spoke these words to Congress, December 5, 1848:

"It was known that the mines of the precious metals existed to a considerable extent in California at the time of its acquisition. Recent discoveries render it probable that these mines are more extensive and valuable than was anticipated.

"The accounts of the abundance of gold in that territory are of such an extraordinary character as would scarcely command belief were they not corroborated by the authentic reports of officers in the public service, who have visited the mineral district, and derived the facts which they detail from personal observation."

Skeptics became believers, and the Gold Rush was on! (Portrait from *Perley's Reminiscences*, Vol. I, 1886)

At the time the smallest United States gold coin was the $2.50 piece, popularly known as the quarter eagle. (The gold dollar was not introduced until the following year, 1849.) The estimated 1,389 quarter eagles from the first government deposit bore the notation CAL. on the reverse, thus making them the first commemorative coins ever issued by a United States mint. The fact that these are true commemoratives is without a doubt, as the above government correspondence indicates that the pieces were to have been made to satisfy those seeking a souvenir coin specifically made from California gold.

Apparently, 1848 CAL. quarter eagles were available at face value to anyone desiring them. Although 1,389 pieces were minted, probably fewer than two or three dozen numismatists—if, indeed, even that many—learned of them at or near the time of issue and added the coins to their cabinets. Among those acquiring such pieces was Chief Engraver James B. Longacre, who preserved at least three prooflike specimens in his personal collection. Most were probably distributed to the general public, for interest in the California Gold Rush was extremely intense at that time, and news of treasure in the West dominated the newspapers. Any unsold coins were undoubtedly put into circulation at face value, as evidenced by the fact that the majority of the examples known today show evidence of wear. The writer has never seen any publicity or outside notices, apart from government correspondence, pertaining to this early issue.

Numismatic Considerations

I estimate that about 25 to 40 pieces exist in Mint State today, most of these being closer to MS-60 than to higher levels. Grading interpretations differ, often widely. Mint State specimens are usually highly prooflike, and some have been called "Proof" for this reason.[1] A handful of beautiful gems exist.

To these can be added an estimated 125 to 175 in worn grades, mostly VF or EF, but occasionally higher or lower.

Most show obverse die striae from the preparation process and file marks from the border (below left side of date). When first struck, specimens had prooflike surfaces rather than lustrous mint frost. The prooflike surface on the reverse extends to within the shield stripes, indicating that the die was intentionally polished. However, the die polishing was not of the caliber used on contemporary Proof gold coins. All specimens have slight weakness on the obverse in the curl of the hair under the ear.

Perhaps the first specimen to cross the auction block was that auctioned among about 600 coins on February 20, 1851, by Moses Thomas & Son, Philadelphia, under title of *Executors' Sale. Valuable Collection of Gold and Silver Coins and Medals, Etc., Catalogue of the Entire Collection of Rare and Valuable Coins, Medals, Autographs, Mahogany Coins Case, Etc., Late of Doctor Lewis Roper, deceased.* The 1848 CAL. brought *face value.*[2]

W. Elliot Woodward's sale of the Bache, Bertsch, Lightbody, Lilliendahl, Vinton, and Watson Collections, March 1863, also offered an example. The Roxbury, Massachusetts dealer had bought all of these collections outright, and over a period of time he auctioned selections from them:

> Lot 2812: 1848 Brilliant Proof, having on the reverse Cal., to indicate that it was coined from the first gold of California received that year, excessively *rare.*

The coin sold for $4.25 to J. Osborn Emery, one of the more active numismatists of the era. Years later in March 1880, Woodward handled it again, in his sale of the Emery, Taylor & Loomis Collections, as Lot 1035, using the same description that he had penned in 1863.

In January 1870, M. Thomas & Sons, Philadelphia auctioneers, auctioned the numismatic estate of James B. Longacre, who had served as chief engraver at the Mint from 1844 until his death on January 1, 1869. These items were included:

> Lot 170: 1848 Quarter eagle; the first gold coinage of California; *obverse,* head of Liberty; *reverse,* spread eagle with the letters *"Cal."* on the field above the eagle; Proof, very rare.
>
> Lot 171: 1848, same as above.
>
> Lot 172: 1848, same as above.

Each of the coins brought $5.50. This trio indicates that Longacre must have appreciated the historical significance of these coins. Today, it is likely that these would be called prooflike Mint State. The *Proof* designation recurs among later auction listings, but no true Proofs were ever made.[3]

In the January 1890 sale of the Robert Coulton Davis Collection, by the New York Coin & Stamp Co., this was offered:

> 1848 Usual type, but CAL. Counterstamped with dies over eagle; Very Fine and sharp. It is more prob-

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[1] At one time the *Guide Book of United States Coins* stated that two Proofs were known, this on the advice of a Midwestern dealer. Later, one of these "Proofs" was inspected by modern students of the series and found to be prooflike Mint State, after which the Proofs were deleted (cf. comment to author by Kenneth E. Bressett, *Guide Book* editor).

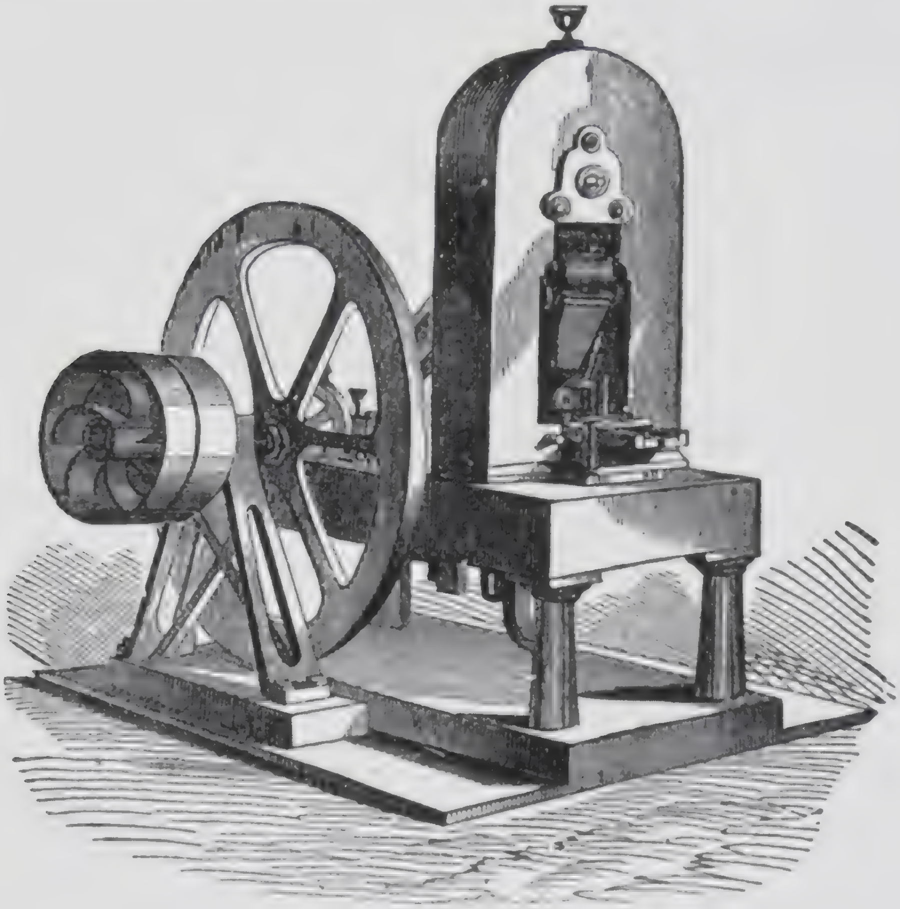
[2] Citation furnished by Dr. Joel J. Orosz, who added this comment: "As William Dubois and Roper were friends, I feel certain that this was one of the specimens presented to a numismatist—indeed, one of the first examples struck."

[3] *Mason's Coin and Stamp Collectors' Magazine,* Vol. IV, p. 27, included this commentary: "The collection of the coins, medals, etc., belonging to the estate of James B. Longacre (deceased), late of the United States Mint, was sold at public auction, by Messrs. Thomas & Sons, of this city, on Friday afternoon, January 21. A very respectable audience was present at this sale, and the coins realized good prices...."

> able that this counterstamp was placed on the coin while still in the obverse die, as no abrasion is found on the obverse, as there would have been if done afterward. The discovery of gold in California in 1848 gives additional force to the possibility of this piece having been struck from the first gold received at the mint for assay and coinage; exceedingly rare.

And, for good measure, this April 1924 account by Henry Chapman, in his sale of the A.C. Nygren Collection, mentions how *interesting* the variety is:

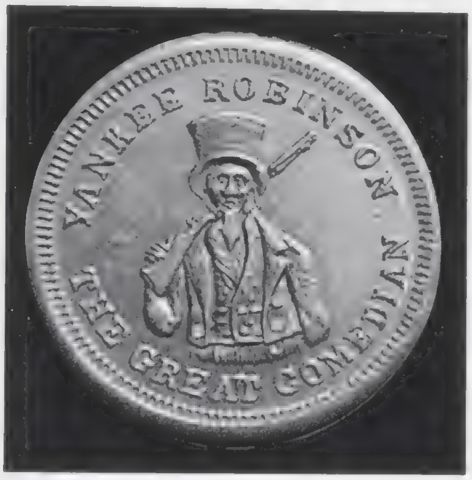
> Lot 52: 1848 Regular issue of this year, but over head of the eagle on the reverse there was punched in CAL (California) while the coin was yet in the die as the obverse is not flattened as it otherwise would have been. Extremely Fine. Excessively Rare. This coin was made from the first gold from California received at the U.S. Mint, Philadelphia.
>
> Mr. Edgar H. Adams writes me: "Col. R.B. Mason, Military Governor of California, sent in twenty-five to thirty ounces of gold to Secretary of War Marcy, who sent it to the Mint and requested that a quantity of the metal be used in the making of quarter eagles, to bear a distinguishing mark as the Director of the Mint might think proper." This is one of the most interesting coins from an historical point of view that has been made in the past hundred years in the U.S.



Knuckle-action steam-powered coining press of the general type used to strike the 1848 quarter eagles and other coins of the era. Steam power for coinage was introduced at the Mint in 1836. (*Illustrated History of the United States Mint,* published by George G. Evans, 1892)

ADVENTURE NO. 27

THE NUMISMATIC LEGACY OF "YANKEE ROBINSON"



Enlarged illustration of the obverse of an 1863 Civil War token issued by Yankee Robinson. By his own account, as stated on his tokens, he was a "great comedian." Indeed, in this year he appeared in Cincinnati and elsewhere in comic roles on stage.

For many years Robinson toured eastern and midwestern reaches of the United States and delighted audiences. John Stanton, the Cincinnati diesinker, produced many tokens for Robinson, assuring the entertainer of a permanent numismatic legacy.

* * *

Yankee Robinson's Early Career

Introduction

This "adventure" is quite like No. 17 concept-wise, in that it offers *total immersion*, not this time in the Hard Times era of Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger, but as an armchair journey with a circus troupe, all of course numismatically connected! If you are in a hurry, skip ahead. Otherwise, I invite you to become acquainted with the town of Honeoye and the marvelous Wallapus beast, two things I did not know about until I delved into writing this! And, perhaps you can figure out the biography of the dashing Madame Sanyeah (or perhaps not).

Among the nearly 1,000 individuals and business people who issued Civil War tokens in the 1860s, the pieces bearing the name of Yankee Robinson are among the most interesting.[1] Good news: examples of typical varieties are quite inexpensive, and a representative specimen can be easily acquired.

Traditionally in numismatic circles, Robinson's address has been given as Cincinnati, for that is where his *tokens* were struck. Further, this seems to have been one of his favorite venues for stage appearances. Like most trouping entertainers, Robinson did not stay in any one place very long, and thus it is a question as to what town should be called his home. In the early 1860s he wintered, or at least spent part of the winter, in DeRuyter, New York, a town near Syracuse, with which he had a connection as early as 1860, through his sometime partner and financial backer Daniel Scott, a horse trader (literally), who lived there. Thus, the attribution of his 1863-dated tokens to Scott's town is as good as any, based upon the information on hand, although it seems that the peripatetic Robinson could hardly be called a resident of the place, despite his wife and children staying there for a while. However, in circusiana, someone's *guess* often becomes someone else's *citation*, and a publication or two later is viewed as *fact*. Robinson's "paper trail" of newspaper announcements is largely unexplored, at least until now, and as more clippings are located, his locations and activities can be pinpointed with greater certainty.

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[1] Sources include: *The New York Clipper* and *New York Clipper Almanac*, issues as cited, 1850s onward. Contemporary articles considered to be more reliable than later reminiscences. • Stuart Thayer, *Annals of the American Circus 1793-1860*, 2000. A particularly important text, well annotated. • Stuart Thayer, *Traveling Showmen: The American Circus before the Civil War*, 1997. • John A. Dingess (1829-1901), manuscript on circus life written circa the 1880s, preserved by the Hertzberg Circus Collection and Museum, San Antonio, Texas (copy supplied by CWM); a compilation of *verbatim* quotations from early articles, but mostly unattributed, together with other information, reliable and otherwise. • John Culhane, *The American Circus*, 1990. • William L. Slout, *Olympians of the Sawdust Circle: A Biographical Dictionary of the Nineteenth Century American Circus*, 1998. Authoritative; much information from the *New York Clipper.* • "The Starting Point," by Jack R. Detwiler, *JCWTS*, Fall 1985, p. 12; this relating to tokens. • Fred Dahlinger, Jr., The Circus World Museum (cited as CWM), Baraboo, Wisconsin, has provided much information to the author over the years. The CWM is an immense resource and repository without equal anywhere in the world. • Other sources are footnoted.

I have always enjoyed circusiana and I have always enjoyed tokens. These pieces bring the two specialties together in a nice way. What started out as a simple "adventure" or chapter quickly expanded as I located an increasing number of modern books on circus history, some with confusing and contradictory information. Not making matters any easier were the accounts of another, unrelated circus personality, *John* Robinson, whose exploits were grouped by some under the Yankee Robinson heading. More about this in a subsequent paragraph.

My interest piqued, and loving a challenge, I turned to original source material, aided immensely by Fred Dahlinger, Jr., of the Circus World Museum, Baraboo, who sent me a huge file—over 100 sheets—of newspaper clippings, photographs, old-time accounts, notes contributed by past historians, and more. Thus, if this "adventure" were titled in the manner of a circus banner, it would star Yankee Robinson, but Fred Dahlinger would certainly be a star performer.

Separately, I read through a complete file of the trade journal of the 1850s onward, the *New York Clipper* and enough old-time newspapers to fill a closet. Among the latter I kept an eye out for other things—and copied many articles about coins, banks, paper money, gold, and other numismatic subjects—for future use who knows where.

The Early Years

Fayette Lodawick Robinson was born on May 2, 1818, at Honeoye Lake, near Avon Mineral Spring, Livingston County, New York.[1] His father was Able (or Abel) Robinson, and his mother, Sophia, was the former Miss Noble.

Among his ancestors was the Rev. Dr. Robinson, "the eminent divine who came from England aboard the *Mayflower*" in 1620. While a teen-aged student in his native town, Yankee Robinson made his first stage appearance in a school play, essaying the title role of Jonathan Doolittle in *A Yankee in England*. No doubt this inspired the nickname "Yankee," which in later years became his trademark.

At the age of 14, Robinson began the shoemaker's trade, working with his father in West Richmond, Ontario County, New York. Horse-drawn wagons carrying Old Sickles' Show stopped near West Richmond, and the troupe was set to make a stand in the town the next day. Lacking enough horses to pull the equipment over the muddy roads, the troupe hired extra horses and paid young Robinson a silver shilling to ride on the lead horse to guide the way.[2] In a way, this marked the lad's entry into the entertainment business.

In 1837 Robinson relocated to Medina, a town about 50 miles to the northwest of West Richmond, and built a shop in which he conducted business as a shoemaker, a venture that seemed to prove successful. However, after spending about a year in that venue, he returned to West Richmond and on June 24, 1837, married Cynthia, a daughter of Silas Nye of Pittsford, New York. Unfortunately, the union proved brief as his wife died a short time afterward.[3] The couple is said to have had one child, a son, Silas, who died at an early age and was buried alongside his mother.[1]

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[1] Genealogical research by Sandra Slater. Listed in some records as born in Richmond, N.Y. • Also, "Fayette Lodavick [*sic*] Robinson," feature in "Our Dramatic Portrait Gallery" column, *New York Clipper*, December 30, 1865 (but giving Avon Mineral Spring as the town of his nativity). Information up to and including "he returned to West Richmond and married" is from this article (but his bride's name was not given there). • A reminiscence by J.L. Hutchinson, published in the *Chicago Tribune*, September 9, 1884, gave this information: "Years ago he lived in Honeoye Falls, New York, and I think he was born there. The place is right near Canandaigua. He used to keep a shoemaker's shop there many years ago, for he has often spoken to me of it. I think he married his first wife there." • A different person from Fayette Robinson, author in 1849 of *California and Its Gold Regions* (published by Stringer & Townsend, NY). • Lodawick is the spelling most often encountered. It seems to be a variation of Ludovic or Ludwig.

[2] More likely a silver Spanish-American two-real or "two bit" piece, commonly called a "shilling" in upstate New York at the time.

[3] "Fayette Lodavick Robinson," *New York Clipper*, December 30, 1865, noted: "At the end of a year [in Medina] he returned home and was married, and a few months after his wife died." However, later historians suggest that the couple married, a child was born in the normal course of events (nine months or more later), and after that, his wife died.

Success as a Showman

A biographical account published in the *New York Clipper* in 1865, believed to have been based upon information supplied by Robinson, carried the story forward:[2]

> We next find him on a traveling tour for a few months, bringing up at Danville, N.Y., where he again embarked extensively in the shoe trade, and where he married again, but still the fever raged for show business.[3]
>
> In August 1845 he concluded to try his fortune by commencing at the lowest rung in the ladder. He started with a one-horse wagon and the scriptural paintings by S.C. Jones of the *Raising of Lazarus* and the *Baptism of Christ*, which was a total failure.[4]
>
> In December following [1845] he found himself in St. Louis, Mo., where he made his first and only appearance in tragedy as Radcliffe in *Richard the Third*, under the management of Mormon Adams, in a hall corner of Third and Pine streets.[5] To use his own words, 'It was the teetotalist failure on record.'[6]
>
> In the February following [1846] he organized a band of minstrels known as The Virginia Serenaders, thinking he had talent in that line. He played a short engagement at Madame Tielman's Theatre, Main Street, and appeared as Lucy Long, which was as great a success as Radcliffe was a failure. He traveled in Illinois and Wisconsin with his band, meeting with success, as his wench business was pretty good.[7]
>
> While in Galena [Illinois] one day, a party made him an offer to trade a store for a show, and in a few minutes we find our hero behind the counter, and his team, &c., in other hands.
>
> During the summer, June and Turner's Circus visited Galena for four days, and when June heard of Robinson he called on him. It was agreed he was to appear on trial, and if he made a hit, certain terms were to be given to him to travel. The hit was made, and he remained with the company two seasons.
>
> The winter between he put in at Rockwell's Amphitheatre, Cincinnati.[8] In the winter of 1847-8 he taught dancing in Hannibal [*sic;* should be Hamilton], Ohio,[9] and vicinity, and the next May organized a Room Show in Eaton, Preble County, Ohio.
>
> His wife assisted afterwards, made her mark in general chambermaids and particularly Yankee gals. He traveled under the title of the Robinson Family, playing farces, singing quartets, comic songs, &c. He made his mark in localizing Yankee stories, in which he has few equals.
>
> Finding business increasing, he engaged more people, till halls (in those days) would not accommodate his troupe or audiences. He then made a tent with his own hands at Rock Island, Illinois, and started the Robinson Athenæum,[10] playing the *Drunkard* and like pieces, and as each tent was worn out its successor would be much larger.

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[1] Long thereafter, G.W. Churchill, in an article in the *Des Moines* (Iowa) *Sunday Register*, November 6, 1927, included this information, but quoted no source: "He was married in 1837, but his wife lived only long enough to bear him a daughter and a son, Silas Robinson, who as a man also followed the stage." • The son born to this union, is otherwise believed to have died, but a later son was named Silas and was in show business. The mention of a daughter born to this union has not been encountered elsewhere, although another daughter (who by 1884 was known as Mrs. Bulla) is said to have been born in 1853.

[2] "Fayette Lodavick Robinson," *New York Clipper*, December 30, 1865.

[3] A reminiscence by his long-time friend, J.L. Hutchinson, published in the *Chicago Tribune*, September 9, 1884, gave variant information as to the place of his second marriage: "His second wife he married in Chicago." However, Hutchinson did not know Robinson at the time of this wedding, and he may have recalled incorrectly what he had heard from Robinson or someone else.

[4] Although no reproduction of these images has been encountered by the author, it is likely that they were painted in bold colors with broad strokes on ordinary canvas, and rolled up on rods while being transported. At the time such large-format scenes were very popular to illustrate topics from the Bible, American history, and elsewhere. Particularly wide scenes, some of which were scrolled horizontally as to move in front of the audience, were called panoramas or dioramas or, occasionally, a contrived name incorporating "opti," "pano," "rama," and other elements suggestive of viewing. • The precise date was August 7, 1845, as later noted in his advertising; *e.g.*, an announcement printed in 1875 that "The 7th of August marks 30 long years he has directed his best energies to amusement giving."

[5] Play by Shakespeare; first performed in London 1592-3.

[6] This and other information would seem to indicate that the *New York Clipper* article was based upon personal information supplied by Robinson or an interview with him (as distinct from miscellaneous publicity, second-hand accounts, etc.). • Quotations are subject to change, and in Robinson's obituary in the *New York Clipper*, September 13, 1884, the comment was given as follows, together with some other information: "The theatre was located in the third story of a block at the corner of Third and Pine streets. Norman Adors was the manager. Mr. Robinson's recollection of his own efforts—his first and only appearance in tragedy—was that 'it was the worst attempt at acting ever made.'"

[7] Wench business: Meaning unclear, but may have referred in general to showgirls in his troupe, these being attractive to paying customers.

[8] Stuart Thayer, *Annals of the American Circus 1793-1860*, pp. 206 and 207. "Henry Rockwell, who in the mid 1840s was associated with Oscar Stone in the partnership of Rockwell & Stone, wintered in Cincinnati in 1846-1847, with Rockwell tending matters while Stone was elsewhere. In 1846 he began a building which was known as Rockwell's Amphitheatre at the corner of Vine and Sixth Streets, with seating stated to be 2,000. Rockwell kept two circus troops on the road in 1847 and 1848, under title of Rockwell & Co., New York Circus."

[9] John A. Dingess, manuscript, adds: "also [taught dancing] at Richmond, Indiana."

[10] Athenæum is the normal spelling used elsewhere by different entities in America, meaning a repository (or exhibition) of learning,

> He finally broke up at Indianapolis, and established the first permanent theatre there, playing in winter and traveling with a canvas in the summer. He has been extensively engaged since in circus and animal shows.
>
> While in Columbia, S.C., in 1859, his wife died, and for a time our hero was nearly broken up, but the indomitable spirit broke forth anew, and success was varied for a few years.

Seeking More Information

While the annals of numismatics are laced with inaccuracies, false recollections, unsubstantiated recollections, and the like, the history of the circus may eclipse it in regard to uncertainties. While mileposts in coin collecting are provided by many catalogues, dealer price lists, magazines, society minutes, and more, this is not true for circusiana. Facts are often elusive, and reminiscences printed years or decades later often do not square with the few *contemporary* sources that can be found, such as newspaper accounts and route lists.

The Circus World Museum, in Baraboo, Wisconsin, is the epicenter for circus research and a repository for vast amounts of information. As noted, Fred Dahlinger, Jr., of that facility has provided copies of many original clippings, newspaper advertisements, and other ephemera, indeed the majority of those used. In the present study of Yankee Robinson, an effort has been made to separate fact from fiction, and to note where differences occur, even among Robinson's own accounts. Among the works of modern circus historians, I have found Stuart Thayer's *Annals of the American Circus 1793-1860* to be particularly valuable. However, Yankee Robinson's activities occupy but a few paragraphs in this impressive text.

Complicating the situation—but furnishing a fascinating challenge—are several conundrums peculiar to Yankee Robinson. First, the surname Robinson occurs elsewhere in circus and traveling show lore, and published historical accounts often intertwine information about John Robinson and, separately, John F. Robinson, with Yankee Robinson lore. James Robinson, who also called himself "Yankee" Robinson for a time circa 1867 seems to have been connected in some way with *our* Yankee Robinson; *i.e.*, Fayette Lodawick Robinson. Patently incorrect information in later popular accounts (*e.g.*, such as to the effect that Yankee Robinson was a part of P.T. Barnum's Roman Hippodrome) has been omitted from the present narrative. To help sort Robinson fact from fancy, William L. Slout's *Olympians of the Sawdust Circle: A Biographical Dictionary of the Nineteenth Century American Circus*, was of great use.

The accounts in the present study are noted as to origin and, as appropriate, as to my opinion of their certainty. While some of the information I present may contain errors unrecognized by me, and should be taken *cum grano salis*, at least a small grain, I believe that more about *our* Yankee Robinson has been gathered here than in any other modern place. And yet, as the final words were written about this "adventure" entry, I could not help but think that this is but the tip of the iceberg, and without too much difficulty a fairly lengthy *book* could be written about him.

Minstrelsy (1846)

As noted, in February 1846, Robinson organized a 12-person traveling show, the Virginia Serenaders, name also given in a later account as Olympic Serenaders, which offered variety acts, minstrelsy (typically consisting of whites in blackface made by burnt cork), and a tight-rope exhibition. Robinson took the name "Lucy Long," in blackface, and played this comic role in various venues for the next eight years.

In addition to the earlier-quoted 1865 account, believed to include information personally supplied by "our hero" (as the *New York Clipper* designated him), I proceed to other sources. Years later an account told of his activities, possibly during the 1840s:[1]

> A small drop curtain was used, which had been purchased at the sale of a lot of scenery of a defunct theatrical company of which Wesley Barmore and Dave Oakes were members. The drop represented the usual ancient Grecian ruin.[2]
>
> A one-horse vehicle was built to transport the wonders of art, and with a single companion, Rasselas Fairchild, Robinson set out to make his fortune. Arrived at Chicago, he exhibited two weeks at Judge Fuller's Museum, then at the corner of Randolph and Dearborn streets. The fortnight's percentage amounted to $9.

June & Turner's Circus (1846-7)

In spring 1846, after his Serenaders failed to live up to expectation, Yankee Robinson joined the June & Turner Circus. Aaron Turner and James M. June operated the outfit, a partnership that began in the mid 1830s and continued throughout the next decade. The

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from ancient Athens, a seat of learning. However, Robinson most often used the variant spelling Atheneum in his publicity.

[1] *The New York Clipper*, obituary, September 13, 1884.

[2] At the time the typical opera house or stage performance venue included sets of "standard" painted scenic backdrops to be used for just about every type of play, from Shakespeare to modern dramas and comedies. Typical drops included the wall of a high-society home, the wall of a plain cottage, a forest, a lake or water scene, ancient temples and ruins, a commercial sidewalk / street scene, etc.

circus spent the winter in Cincinnati in 1845. On April 7, 1846, the outfit went on the road from there, under the title of The New York Circus, with June being the "manager and conductor of all business matters." What Aaron Turner did during this traveling season is not known. Timothy Turner was equestrian director, and Napoleon Turner was riding master. The admission tickets cost 20 cents for children and 30 cents for adults. Music was provided by Vogler's brass band, an outfit carried in "a magnificent car with six golden horses."[1]

In 1847 the partnership toured under the name of June & Turner's Menagerie Circus. Entertainment took place under a tent with seating stated to be 3,000. In 1848 June & Turner's Menagerie Circus toured the East.

Circus historian Stuart Thayer described the outfit that Yankee Robinson joined:[2]

> In 1847 the June & Turner Circus and Menagerie advertised a tent that was 150 by 75 feet. This was a 75-foot round top divided into two end pieces with approximately 75 feet of additional canvas inserted between the half rounds. They must have placed their cages at either end, saving the center for the ring and the seating. In the next season, one in which they had no menagerie, they reverted to a 90-foot round top.

Thayer has studied and published the June & Turner routes for the warmer seasons of 1846 and 1847.[3] The show did not feature Yankee Robinson in any headlines. How Yankee Robinson's joining in Galena in spring or summer 1847 fits into the following schedule for that year is not known. Perhaps he continued in his Lucy Long blackface role as well as serving in other capacities. In small traveling shows, the typical performer did many different things.

June & Turner's Menagerie and Circus Route for 1847

Staff, headliners, and published troupe members:[4]

James M. June, manager. Simon B. W. Post, bandleader. William June, agent. Timothy Turner, Horace W. Nichols and James W. Myers, performers. [No mention of Yankee Robinson]

Illinois: May 17-18: Springfield

Missouri: June 1-5: St. Louis • July 3: Hannibal

Illinois: July 5-6: Quincy • July 8: Warsaw • July 9: Carthage • July 10: Nauvoo

Iowa: July 20-21: Burlington

Illinois: September: Chicago (?)

Wisconsin: September 14-16: Milwaukee • September 21: Kenosha

Thayer wrote this concerning a local extortion, indicating the circus was on the road past the September dates cited above:[5]

> The June & Turner Circus contracted with Logansport, Indiana, in October 1847 for a $5 license. When the company arrived in town they were confronted with a demand for $20. Rather than submit to what they considered underhanded behavior, the managers decided to go elsewhere.

On Water and on Land (1848-1851)

In 1848 Yankee Robinson remarried. He and his new wife, the daughter of Capt. Drake (who had served in the American Revolution), signed with Lennox's Floating Circus on the Ohio River at Evansville, Indiana. The troupe traveled the Ohio and Mississippi rivers and put on shows at various towns along the way. Such water-borne circuses typically either had their own boat (as did Lennox) or, in some instances, performed in the main saloon or open space at the center of a passenger steamboat. These rigs were exceedingly popular, as they permitted easy transport of people, animals, and equipment, and the tie-up places were usually in the center of a town's commercial district. As there was no need to erect or dismantle tents or other equipment, two or three engagements could sometimes be made in a single day.

This account tells of the arrangements:[6]

> In 1848 he again embarked in business on his own hook, starting from Eaton, O., with a two-horse wagon. The company consisted of himself, his second wife and a musician—a versatile performer, one Charles Gilson, formerly of Cazenovia, N.Y. Yankee closed a successful season at New Albany, Ind., late in the fall of '48, and left team and traps for the winter.[7]
>
> He then engaged with Mr. Lennox (father of Walter Lennox) to appear on a floating theatre, and performed at the various towns en route to Memphis and the South. At Memphis the debts against the company had accumulated to such an extent that the sheriff possessed himself of the steamer's throttle-valve, on behalf of the creditors. The scenery and properties being clandestinely removed, a theatre was set up in an abandoned church, and a successful season continued until April, 1849. Star engagements were played by the elder

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[1] Stuart Thayer, *Annals of the American Circus 1793-1860*, pp 202-203. Thayer's several texts are much more carefully footnoted and attributed than are most circus histories.

[2] *Traveling Showmen: The American Circus before the Civil War*, p. 61.

[3] Stuart Thayer, *Annals of the American Circus 1793-1860*, p. 298.

[4] *Ibid*, p. 299.

[5] Stuart Thayer, *Traveling Showmen: The American Circus before the Civil War*, p. 93.

[6] Story published in the Baraboo *Republic*, May 14, 1884. This extensive story seems to have been constructed from clippings and file items relating to Robinson, rather than an interview with Robinson himself, although he may have contributed to it.

[7] Traps: Equipment and accessories.

> Booth,[1] Eliza Logan and father, and Mulholland appeared in *The Old Guard*. Miss Canton was the leading lady, and Mrs. Robinson (a novice) played seconds. Old Dan Emmett led the orchestra. Yankee Robinson appeared for 54 nights as comic-singer.
>
> [In the] spring, he started out with a two-horse team, playing *Box and Cox*, etc. In the fall he had a fine four-horse carriage made in Michigan, and enlarged the company so as to present petite comedies and moral dramas like *The Drunkard*, and he continued this enterprise until 1851.
>
> At Quincy, Ill. he began his first tent exhibitions employing 14 horses and giving dramatic performances. He closed the season at Rock Island and prepared a new outfit, hiring 13 horses in addition to his own band-team and a one-horse buggy. A.S. Burt was in advance,[2] Chas. H. Wilson principal comedian, and the scenery was by H.W. Waugh, who afterwards clowned as Dilly Fay. The season was prosperous, and terminated at Eaton, O.[3]

Regarding his first exhibition at Quincy, a later account noted that he had lost his tent in a storm while set up "just east of the Cathedral," and that his entourage continued by traveling over country roads, showing in Payson and other towns.[4]

On September 9 and 10, 1851, the F.L. Robinson Company played in Davenport, Iowa, under a "pavilion" (tent) measuring 70 by 40 feet, with 1,000 seats.[5] The troupe consisted of 30 ladies and gentlemen, some of whom were part of a brass band. Performances were given daily at 2 and 9 p.m.

Atheneum! (1852)

An 1852 advertisement bearing the name of *J.L.* Robinson featured what was called "the oldest established vaudeville company in the United States," a bold claim for *our* F.L. Robinson, who started in the business just seven years earlier, in 1845. The text was illustrated by an engraving of a tall tent with horses and wagons in the foreground.

> ATHENEUM!
>
> **Robinson & Co.**
>
> J.L. Robinson, Manager and Proprietor
>
> THE OLDEST ESTABLISHED VAUDEVILLE COMPANY IN THE U.S.
>
> The Manager respectfully announces to the Ladies and Gentlemen of this place that he has refined his Establishment in a superior manner for the traveling season of 1852, and will offer a series of his popular
>
> MORAL, NOVEL AND MIRTHFUL
>
> Representations under his Water Proof Pavilion, erected on an entire new plan, capable of accommodating nearly 1,000 persons.
>
> There will be given in PORTAGE CITY
> THREE ENTERTAINMENTS
>
> On Friday Evening and Saturday P.M. and Evening, June 18th and 19th.
>
> Afternoon performance—Doors open at 1½ o'clock. Curtain will rise at 2 o'clock.
>
> Evening performance—Doors open at 7. Curtain will rise at 8 o'clock.
>
> This company embraces near twenty-five Ladies and Gentlemen, many of whom stand at the head of their respective professions, as Performers, Vocalists, Musicians, and Dancers, making the best Vaudeville company ever organized.
>
> **This Splendid Establishment**
>
> Characterized by a degree of excellence and novelty never before attempted in the annals of *avenue* entertainments, presents its claims upon the public for their patronage solely on its superiority. Without the ordinary display of showy bills and glaring pictures, well calculated to attract attention and dray many who find, too late, that it is
>
> **"Not all Gold that Glitters!"**
>
> and that almost as much may be seen placarded on the walls of Hotels, &c., as within the Pavilion. We, upon a reputation already established and without ostentation, regarding those things as only a species of humbug intended to catch the unwary, trust to our merits alone for the patronage we deserve.
>
> 4,000 feet magnificent Panoramic Painting. To correspond with each act, together with a stock of wardrobe properties, &c., are used.
>
> **A SUPERB BRASS BAND**
>
> Will discourse music on entering each town, followed by a train of carriages and baggage wagons.

As clearly stated in the advertising, the preceding was a traveling vaudeville show, with stage performers, scenic backdrops, and a band of musicians. While no definition of *circus* is pleasing to everyone, in general a circus refers to a troupe combining exotic animals, at least one clown, and acts of daring—usually held in an arena or under canvas, and which travels to visit multiple locations.

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[1] Junius Brutus Booth (1796-1852), a British born Shakespearean actor who came to America in 1821 and achieved great renown. His two sons, Edwin Thomas Booth (1833-1893) and the assassin of Lincoln, John Wilkes Booth (1838-1865), each became famous on the stage.

[2] The "advance man" went to towns a week or two in advance and "papered" the community with posters and notices, inserted stories and advertisements in local newspapers, etc., to generate enthusiasm for the coming attraction.

[3] Recollection published in the Baraboo *Republic*, May 14, 1884.

[4] Newspaper of December 1878 account cited by Carl Landrum, in "'Yankee' Robinson, Tent Showman," in the *Quincy Herald-Whig*, July 21, 1991. In 1878 Robinson was playing in town at the Opera House, and the story told of his earlier activities in the district.

[5] From Joseph S. Schick, *Early Theatre in Eastern Iowa*, cf. George L. Chindahl Collection, Circus World Museum. Also, notes by Tom Parkinson preserved by the same institution.

On April 14, 1852, early in the season, the F.L. Robinson Company was in Davenport, Iowa. The program included the melodrama, *The Drunkard, or the Fallen Saved,* together with what seems to have been a feature of opposite morality, "a new laughable Temperance Farce." Songs, duets, instrumental solos, and other acts were presented "under his new, large, water-proof pavilion, with safe elevated seats, new and magnificent scenery, wardrobe, etc." The single show that day was at 8 p.m., with 25 cents as admission. The company members included: Charles H. Wilson, director of the drama; T.B. Hughes, prompter; Luke Adams, leader of brass band; Professor E. Athlick, author of music and leader of orchestra; T.R. Luff, property maker; Messrs. Waugh and Burt, scenic artists; and A.S. Bird, traveling agent.[1]

The Atheneum at this time was not a circus, but that would soon change.

Yankee Robinson's Circus

"Yankee" Joins the Bill (1852-3)

In the winter season of 1852-3, Robinson leased Frank's Museum in Cincinnati, and there added "Yankee" before his surname, becoming Yankee Robinson on current and future bills,[2] although he is believed to have used this as a nickname since the time of his aforementioned stage appearance in his youth. As events would prove, this name was fine and quite memorable for use in show banners and publicity until Yankees became very unpopular in certain districts as the clouds of the Civil War gathered.

Yankee Robinson went on the road in spring 1853 with his show under canvas, opening in Dayton, Ohio, with the melodramas, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *Sam Patch.* R.J. Miller and Ad. Bierce were his comedians, and he employed 30 head of horses.

The following retrospective commentary, by the leading trade paper years later, indicates that as of 1853 the traveling company was considered to be a circus:[3]

> Business proving good, he bought horses and wagons during the summer, and closed at Indianapolis, Ind. During the winter he managed a theatre there and at Dayton. In the company were R.J. Miller and wife (leading), Mary McWilliams (juvenile), Mrs. Robinson (soubrette), Frank Tannebill (juvenile), J.R. Spackman (old-man), Tom Jackson (utility), Ad. Bierce (comedian) and staff. William June was agent, and William Pastor principal performer in the circus.
>
> At Norwalk, O., the two shows met on the same day in deadly opposition, each having purposely shipped same route for several days, and again combined at Columbus, O., the two bands and two companies alternating throughout the same programme. Sending the Burt & Robinson Co. to Noblesville, Ind., Robinson went south with the circus and theatre.

The annals of traveling circuses are filled with scheduling conflicts, including renegade shows jumping into a town just *before* a long-scheduled circus was to appear, and, in effect, stealing from its publicity and attendance. On other times a smaller show would appear in town at the same time, and make puffed claims that it was "bigger" but charged a cheaper fee to attend. Many bitter rivalries were thus engendered.

At the time the horses attached to traveling shows were of two kinds: "baggage horses" or work animals which hauled the wagons and other equipment, and show horses gaily caparisoned and used for entertainment. Equestrian acts were an important part of the presentation, with trick riding, riders in costumes, etc.

Some shows did little in the way of advance publicity, depending upon their entry into a town to create the necessary attention. Arrangements were often made at the last minute. Other circuses laid out their routes months in advance.

Petty local officials often demanded free passes and cash for licenses and permits. The show "adjuster" had as his business the smoothing of problems, which were different with every venue. Local help was hired, or given free tickets, to erect tents, water the animals, and help with arrangements.

Often shows would do their best business in small villages and towns, often connected with civilization by crude roads, with no rail service. Audiences tended to be very appreciative and enthusiastic in such venues. Also, entertainment was so scarce that the children would often see the same show twice, allowing them to converse with their friends and tell them what piece of action or trick was coming next.

In contrast, larger cities were expensive for traveling shows to visit, and net receipts were apt to be less than satisfactory. Small towns in the South in particular were an excellent possibility in the spring and autumn as there were fewer problems with the weather. Northern shows under canvas were reserved for the summer. Shows moved from town to town, often taking down their tents in one place and putting them up a few hours later a few miles away, this being in the days before many shows published route cards and schedules planned long in advance.

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[1] From Joseph S. Schick, *Early Theatre in Eastern Iowa,* cf. George L. Chindahl Collection, Circus World Museum.

[2] C.G. Sturtevant, "Yankee Robinson," *The White Tops,* September 1928.

[3] *The New York Clipper,* obituary, September 13, 1884.

The Yankee Robinson Circus (1854)

This modern account, not specifically annotated as to *contemporary* sources, gives a view of the era:

"His first Yankee Robinson Circus opened in 1854, and some form of the show toured each season through 1876," historian Tom Ogden wrote, although, as seen, the troupe seems to have been recognized as a circus the year before.[1] "For the next seven years, Robinson sporadically toured a tented repertory theater." Further: "The first Yankee Robinson Circus was begun by impresario Yankee Robinson in 1854. In the early years, the show gave matinees only, using the big top for dramatic performances of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Thus Robinson became the first of hundreds of tented repertory shows to enact theatrical versions of the famous Harriet Beecher Stowe novel."

Uncle Tom's Cabin would become the most popular American melodrama ever, with different companies presenting it well into the twentieth century.[2] Its arrival was welcomed each year in various towns, as the younger set knew many of the lines and enjoyed "reviewing" the performance. Similarly, *East Lynne, Lady Audley's Secret*, and other favorites played on a regular basis.

Robinson's Atheneum (1855)

The following advertisement, published in the *Macomb* (Illinois) *Democrat*, September 19, 1855, gives an important *contemporary* view of Robinson's activities. Most would agree that the Atheneum in 1856 qualified as a circus, even without exotic animals:

ROBINSON'S ATHENEUM.
Organized August, 1845, Improved for 1855.
100 Men and Horses,
The Largest Establishment of the Kind in the World.
Consisting of Two Distinct Troupes
Will Perform at Macomb, Sept. 17

Acrobats, Gymnasts, Pantomimists and Minstrels, in their wonderful Vaulting, Contorting, pleasing Eccentricities, &c.

Also a troupe of Ladies and Gentlemen engaged expressly to represent the latest Productions of the Drama.

YANKEE ROBINSON, whose unceasing wit and local bits at time have won for him the cognomen of the "*People's Funny Man.*"

DILLY FAY, the "*Shanghai Clown*," no superior in America.

MONS. DUVAL, the American Hercules, in his feats of unrivaled strengths, Gymnastic Exercises, La Perches [daring balance act from a high position], Ladder, &c., &c.

The best Band traveling.

The *Green Mountain Boys* in their Negro Eccentricities.

Afternoon performance at 2. Evening performance at 7 o'clock.

Admission 40 cts., Children 20 cts. A.P. Newkirk.

Yankee Robinson's Big Show (1856)

"Yankee Robinson's Amphitheatre opened on a minor key in Indianapolis in February 1856, giving twice-a-week performances on Pennsylvania Street. It went out under canvas in April and spent the summer in the Midwest."[3]

In this advertising dated May 3, 1856, and published to announce Robinson's impending arrival in Carrollton, Illinois, we see an increased emphasis on performers, the term, "A New Circus," but with Atheneum retained:

YANKEE ROBINSON'S BIG SHOW.
As Arranged for 1856
150 Men and Horses, a 5 Centre Pole Tent.
A NEW CIRCUS
With a lot of new Feats added to the old popular

ATHENEUM,

Will exhibit at Carrollton, Tuesday, May 13th, 1856, also Whitehall, Monday May 12th, Jerseyville Wednesday May 14th.

Among this troupe will be found

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[1] Tom Ogden, *200 Years of the American Circus*, published by Facts on File. Similarly: "[The Yankee Robinson Circus] was initiated in 1854. For several early years it gave a circus in the afternoon and *Uncle Tom's Cabin* at nights, becoming the first of hundreds of tent shows to give *Uncle Tom*" (John and Alice Durant, *Pictorial History of the American Circus*, Cranbury, NJ: A.S. Barnes & Co., 1957, p. 319).

[2] When motion pictures became popular, beginning in a large way circa 1905-1915 (but building on traditions dating back a decade earlier), *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was a logical choice for multiple-reel features by Imp, Thanhouser, and other production companies.

[3] Stuart Thayer, *Annals of the American Circus 1793-1860*, part of a Robinson account, pp 409-410.

YANKEE ROBINSON,
Dilly Fay, the Shanghai Clown,

Miss Kate Lee, the beautiful dancer. Master Lod Robinson, a "bobbin around." Mons. La Thorne, "Man of Iron." Her Shiel, "Little Giant." Professor Dodge with his trained "Tom." May, Bony, Smyth, Painter,[1] Wolfington, Luff, Mast. Robinson. Mlle. Louisa, "The Dancing Riuten." Together with a host of auxiliaries.

Two shows each day, rain or shine, with an entire change of programme.

Afternoon performance at 2 o'clock.

Evening, performance at 7 o'clock.

Admission, box 40 cents. Children under 10 years of age 20 cents.

If the weather is favorable, there will be a grand street Parade. May 3d, 1856.[2]

During the summer of 1856 Robinson modified his show title and illustrated his advertising with a scene of our separate tents, each with a waving flag lettered to show its contents: Living Animals, Negro minstrels, Big Show (in a tent much larger than the others), and Museum. An advertisement run in Illinois in September noted the following, seemingly about the time that the title of the troupe was changed to Yankee Robinson's Quadruple Show.

YANKEE ROBINSON'S QUADRUPLE SHOW
Four Separate Shows in Four Separate Tents
For One Single Ticket

Over 150 Men and Horses will perform at Kewanee, Wednesday, September 24th.[3] Afternoon performances at 2. Evening performances at 7.

A New Era
In Show Business

YANKEE ROBINSON, determined not to be outdone by any establishment in the world, has got, this season,

Four Separate Shows!
In
Four Separate Tents!

50 cents will buy a through ticket to all Four Shows. Let reports be what they may! Yankee Robinson has added to his old and popular Athenæum[4] A BRAND NEW CIRCUS! Fresh trained Horses, Ponies, and Mules. A band of Negro Minstrels! Living Animals! And Museum Curiosities!

Dilly Fay! The Shanghai Clown, will introduce his wonderful trained Low Comedy Elephant!

Another Feature has been added: Miss Paintero, a Creole Lady,[5] will make a Grand Ascension on a single rope *nearly 400 feet long*, to the uttermost top of the five-centre-pole tent! On the day of exhibition, free to all.

If the weather is propitious there will be a Street Parade by all the ladies and gentlemen of the Company, led by the Young America Brass Band, and followed by the Beautiful Ring Horses, Ponies & Mules, the finest and most costly collection in the world.

As this is a new Circus the people may expect lots of New Feats, Tricks, &c., that are entirely original, and only done by this QUADRUPLE COMPANY.

The route for the season included the following towns, plus others not listed:

Yankee Robinson's Route for 1856

Staff, headliners, and published troupe members:[6]

F. L. Robinson, proprietor, O. W. Dodge, ringmaster.

Dilly Fay, clown; Kate Lee, dancer, Mons. LeThorne, Hercules[7]; Tom Shields, Hercules; Mays, Hercules; Painter, ascension; Mlle. Louise, rider; Master Lod Robinson; Wolfington; Luff; Bony; Smyth.

Indiana: January (?): Indianapolis. Winter show?

Illinois: May 5: Postville • May 6: Middletown • May : Petersburg • May 8: Springfield • May 9: Jacksonville • May 10: Winchester • May 11: White Hall • May 13: Carrollton • May 14: Jerseyville

Missouri: May 19-20: St. Louis • May 29: Columbia

Iowa: June 27: Ottumwa • June 28: Fairfield • June 30: Washington • July 3: Davenport

Illinois: July 9: Oquawka • July 15: Cambridge • July 16: Geneseo • July 23: Mt. Carroll

Iowa: July 29: Tipton • September 6: Burlington

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[1] William Painter (William Bracken) performed an ascension act, some times dressed as a woman. On these occasions he was announced as Miss Paintero. (Stuart Thayer, *Annals of the American Circus 1793-1860*, part of a Robinson account, pp 409-410).

[2] Date of insertion of the advertisement, 10 days before arrival.

[3] A large advertisement run in the *McDonough Democrat*, Macomb, Illinois, August 27, 1856, contained similar text, but announced two shows to be given in Macomb on Tuesday, September 16. Accompanying illustrations showed the elephant in several poses including standing on a large ball, standing on its head, and upside-down with its feet in the air, with its back resting on the top of a pole or platform. Other illustrations showed acrobats and tableaux.

[4] Note change of spelling from earlier Atheneum.

[5] Actually, William Painter (William Bracken), in this role a female impersonator. (Stuart Thayer, *Annals of the American Circus 1793-1860*, part of a Robinson account, pp 409-410).

[6] Stuart Thayer, *Annals of the American Circus 1793-1860*, p. 621. Roster information cited from the *Carrollton* (Illinois) *Gazette*, May 3, 1856. • This and other schedules do not necessarily include all stops. Further, various circumstances often caused a circus to depart from a published schedule. Note that the May appearance in Whitehall is dated differently from that in the quoted advertisement. • The players given are those employed at the start of the season. Later, there were some changes.

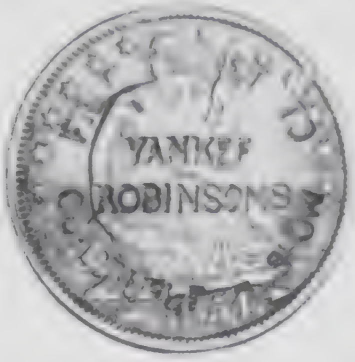
[7] "Mons. LeThorn, the strongman, was in his thirteenth season. The rest of the crew were neophytes, or nearly so." (Stuart Thayer, *Annals of the American Circus 1793-1860*, part of a Robinson account, pp 409-410).

Illinois: September 16: Macomb • September 24:
Kewanee • October 2: Ottawa • October 13: Kankakee
Indiana: October 17: LaPorte • October 29: Goshen

Half-Dollar "Tickets"

Circa 1856 (per the inscription) the subject of our sketch counterstamped American silver coins, especially half dollars, with the inscription: FREE TICKET TO / YANKEE / ROBINSON'S / QUADRUPLE-SHOW. Presumably, thousands of these were so marked and placed into circulation, so that anyone finding them could have "free admission" to the circus, simply by surrendering the half dollar—a caper, of course, but it seems to have worked. It is likely that the show stamped the half dollars as they were encountered (or perhaps a few bank bags of "new" 1854 halves were obtained and stamped), spent them, and townspeople kept them on hand until the circus arrived (see reminiscence below).

By 1856, nearly all of the half dollars available at banks and in commerce were dated from 1853 onward (struck pursuant to the Act of February 21, 1853), of lighter weight than earlier coins. Earlier pieces (1794-1852) of heavier weight had a market value of 52 cents, or slightly more than face value, and were encountered only occasionally.



Liberty Seated half dollar of 1854, counterstamped by Yankee Robinson as a ticket to his Quadruple Show. Likely, these pieces were stamped and spent at face value, after which they circulated widely. Recipients who encountered the pieces were apt to hold them until Robinson's circus next came to town, at which time they turned them in as a "free ticket," a whimsical deception. The counterstamping was sufficiently effective that as late as the circa 1868 era such pieces were still being redeemed, at the rate of about one per day. (Courtesy of Gregory G. Brunk)

Today in numismatics these counter-stamps are met with some frequency (in the context of this specialty), and, perhaps 10 to 15 half dollars are known with this imprint, the earliest dated 1806, most bearing the date 1854, and the latest dated 1855.[1] A few quarter dollars have been reported as well and may have been used for children's admission tickets.

Years later, on September 9, 1884, J.L. Hutchinson, of the circus company of Barnum, Bailey & Hutchinson, provided this reminiscence published on this date in the *Chicago Tribune*. The half dollars are mentioned along with other aspects of Robinson's ingenuity:

> He was the most original advertiser I ever saw. Every once in a while—well, almost every day—we would take in half dollars stamped in the metal, "Good for one admission to Yankee Robinson's show." Of course the half dollar was good, and is now, but there are people who keep those pieces until a circus comes along, for some unexplained reason.
>
> Then he used to have a song he sang, and had a poster made of the music, each note being about two or three feet long, and he would paste it up on the fence. There would be a crowd surrounding it all day, and humming the music.
>
> He was also very egotistical. Once the advance agents got water-bound in some Illinois town in high water in the spring, and the show caught up with them, so no notice was given of our coming to the people. It was his practice under such circumstances to ride ahead one day on a horse to some little town, and, seeing a crowd of loafers in the street or in front of a saloon, he would approach them and ask if they had ever seen the great showman Yankee Robinson. Some would say yes, others no. He would then swell out his chest, take off his hat, and say: "He stands before you. Feast your eyes! The show will be here tomorrow!"

As Hutchinson was not affiliated with Robinson until after the Civil War, it is likely that this account signifies that various townspeople in the trading area of the circus had kept these pieces as souvenirs for a decade or more and redeemed them as the circus came to town. Hutchinson said as much, "there are people who keep these pieces until a circus comes along."

Yankee Robinson's Quadruple Show (1857)

In 1857 Yankee Robinson's Quadruple Show went on the road again, starting in Quincy, Illinois, featuring four separate tents, each with attractions, a reprise of the innovations of 1856. A historian wrote:[2]

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[1] Cf. Gregory Brunk, *American and Canadian Countermarked Coins*. It could have been that 1856- and 1857-dated coins were not available in circulation, and sometime after 1855 such pieces were so marked, using coins on hand. In any event, as Quadruple Show is mentioned, 1856 seems to be a likely date for so stamping the pieces.

[2] John A. Dingess, manuscript, from an unknown source, but probably *verbatim* from an early article.

> His principal outside feature was the famous Horse Ascension. A beautiful animal called Young Black Hawk had been taught to walk a single plank from the group nearly 300 feet [distance measured on a slant] to the top of the center pole of one of the tents, which exhibition was given a few minutes previous to opening the doors for the afternoon performance.... It was truly a novel idea, and brought people to the circus from a great distance.

However, Bloomington, Illinois, *Pantagraph*, May 27, 1857, found fault with a recent performance:[1]

> In the first place, the beautiful young horse, Black Hawk, which has been trained to walk a single plank 300 feet long, to the top of the fifth center pole,[2] didn't walk the plank very extensively; in fact, he didn't walk at all, for two very good reasons, viz: there was no plank to walk upon, and there was in all probability no horse to perform the difficult feat which about a thousand people stood knee deep in mud to witness.
>
> In the second place, Signor Paintero didn't make his grand ascension from the ground to the top of the largest pavilion a few minutes previous to the evening performance. In the third place, the Grand Quadruple Show came off in one tent instead of four, as advertised, and it was, in a general sense, a good deal of a fizzle, and the performances fully illustrated the old saying of "a great cry and little wool."

Long afterward, Yankee Robinson's son Silas told of the events of 1857:[3]

> We had a 75-foot round top and 20-foot middle piece. In one end a portable stage was erected. This was 9 by 15 feet. *The Days of 76* was played in the afternoon and *Uncle Tom's Cabin* at night. There was tumbling, *la perche*, ladders, rings, trapeze, etc. ahead of the drama.
>
> We had three sideshow canvases,[4] large enough to hold one cage and these three completed the "quadruple." The menagerie, one cage, contained a black bear, wolf, raccoon, two monkeys, badger, white rabbits, guinea pigs and a parrot. The museum, one wagon, glass sides, contained a large rib, some quartz specimens, petrifactions, etc. The minstrel organization wagon, box off, planks on, middle man and two end men, orchestra on the ground.
>
> When the crowds gave up their tickets they paid to see it all and wondered how they'd see the rest, without a ticket. When the big show was out, the side canvases of the side shows were dropped and all on the lot viewed the wonders.

The scheduled route for the 1857 season included the following stops:

Yankee Robinson's Quadruple Show Route for 1857

Staff, headliners, and published troupe members:[5]

F. L. Robinson, proprietor; A. S. Burt, agent; Oliver Dodge, equestrian director.

Dilly Fay, clown; Sig. Paintero, ascension; Yankee Miller, actor; Jimmie Fitzgibbons; John Wolfington, acrobat; Master S.S. Robinson; Thomas Jefferson, rider; Mme. Lod Robinson, comic; Mons. Durant, acrobat; Alicia Tournier, rider; O.D. Worstalle, rider; R.J. Miller, actor; John Booker, singer; Thomas Graven, leaper; James Benton, Hercules; T. R. Luff, acrobat; Mons. Choteau, acrobat; C. Franck, scenic rider.

Illinois: April 20-25: Chicago • May 9: Joliet • May 20: Peoria • May 26: Bloomington

Indiana: June 15: Vincennes • July 3-4: Evansville

Kentucky: July 14-15: Louisville

Indiana: July 23: Brownstown • July 25: Paoli • July 27: Orleans • August 8: Laurel • August 10: Brookville • August 11: Harrison

Ohio: August 12-15: Cincinnati • August 14: Hamilton • August 15: Middletown • August 16: Lebanon • August 17: Morrow • August 18: Wilmington • August 19: Washington • August 31: Dresden • September 1: Coshocton • September 2: New Castle • September 3: Mt. Vernon • September 5: Marion • September 7: Bucyrus • September 8: Upper Sandusky • September 9: Carey • September 10: Findlay • September 11: Gilboa • September 18: Bellefontaine • September 19: Urbana

Indiana: October 5-10: Indianapolis • October 24: Terre Haute • November 3: Logansport

Not long thereafter, Robinson's circus seems to have been one of two competitors called "worthless concerns," this from a letter sent by Nixon & Kemp's Circus and published in *The Pantagraph*, Bloomington, Illinois, May 23, 1857.[6]

> Upon our arrival in town yesterday, we were very much surprised to find that our large and expensive posting bills...had been pasted over, dates altered, and otherwise mutilated, by a couple of worthless concerns who

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[1] Cited by Stuart Thayer, *Annals of the American Circus 1793-1860*, pp 409-410.

[2] Concerning the five center poles, years later Yankee's son Silas commented that the main tent had *two* center poles, and the subsidiary canvasses contributed another three, making a total of 5. (Stuart Thayer, *Annals of the American Circus 1793-1860*, part of a Robinson account, pp 409-410).

[3] Stuart Thayer, *Annals of the American Circus 1793-1860*, pp 409-410, citing Silas Robinson in the *New York Clipper*, 23 April 1892.

[4] In the nineteenth century, the usual spelling was canvass and canvasses; changed to modern use in the present text, canvas and canvases.

[5] Stuart Thayer, *Annals of the American Circus 1793-1860*, p. 621. Roster information cited from the Evanston, Indiana *Evening Journal*, June 22, 1857.

[6] As cited by Stuart Thayer, *Traveling Showmen: The American Circus before the Civil War*, pp. 19-20; other information concerning the incident is from Thayer as well.

> seem to be following us in order to derive some advantage from the great popularity of our establishment.

The town of fewer than 2,500 inhabitants must have been a lively scene of acrobats, animals, and circus personnel, for the aforementioned Nixon & Kemp played on May 25, followed by Yankee Robinson on the 26th, and Mabie's Circus on the 27th.

Exactly how the *following of* Nixon & Kemp's circus would have been any advantage is not stated. *Preceding* it, perhaps yes, but picking up the left-over business would seem to have been an unproductive pursuit.

Robinson seems to have run into trouble early in his tour, for in Vincennes, Indiana, on May 15, 1857, Yankee Robinson's circus, "accompanied by side shows not connected with Yankee," had its tent attached by the sheriff, as Robinson did not have a proper exhibit license, after which the side show operators were bankrupted.

However, Robinson's difficulties seem to have been short-lived, for soon he was back on the road again. In September in Coshocton, Ohio, Black Hawk, a trained horse that walked up a 200-foot plank to a height of 40 feet (varying heights and distances are found in contemporary accounts) was frightened by a passing train and fell to its death.[1] Robinson stated that he would not replace the act, as he did not want to subject another horse to the danger.

In September the Panic of 1857 took hold in the eastern cities, and early in October most banks stopped paying out coins in exchange for paper money. There was general apprehension throughout the East and Midwest. Robinson's daily gross receipts dropped from a profitable $600 to a disastrous $100.[2]

Two Shows on Tour (1858)

In 1858 Yankee Robinson was involved in two traveling shows. One was operated with A.S. Burt and was called Burt & Robinson, and the other was a "combination circus and theatre."[3]

The tumultuous, transitional events of 1858 are not easy to explain, and as an entree, the following comments from Stuart Thayer are given, including a route listing.[4]

1858 Route Listing and Personnel

Burt & Robinson's Old Fashioned Circus: A. S. Burt and F. L. Robinson, proprietors.

In June, 1858 because of a disagreement between the proprietors, this company split in two. In September the differences were resolved and the companies were joined again.

The staff and roster of Burt's effort are listed here. A. S. Burt, manager; C. W. Kidder, assistant manager; J. M. Hunter, treasurer; J. J. Justice, general agent; Thomas Kidnell, boss hostler; Alex Dean, boss canvasman; George Choate, bandleader; W. A. Wainwright, assistant bandleader.

Routes:

Indiana: April 12-13: Indianapolis • April 15: Noblesville • April 27: Logansport • May 22: Shelbyville

Illinois: June 4: Springfield

Ohio: (Company split; recombined, Norwalk: September 4)

September 7: Mansfield • September 9: Bucyrus • September 11: Tiffin • September 14: Findlay • September 20: Bellefontaine • September 21: Lancaster • September 24-25: Columbus • September 27: London • September 28: Springfield

Indiana: (laid by Noblesville, reorganized for southern tour)

North Carolina: November 12: Salisbury • November 18-19: Charlotte

South Carolina: December 13: Edgefield

Burt Contingent:

Michigan: July ?: Jonesville

Illinois: July 10: Joliet

Indiana: July 12: Crown Point

Michigan: August 7: Jackson

Robinson Contingent:

Ohio: June 15 Cambridge • June 23: Lisbon • June 26: Canfield • June 28: Youngstown

Pennsylvania: July 1: Mercer • July 2: Shakleyville • July 3: Meadville • July 5: Girard

New York: July 13: Jamestown

Ohio: August 13: Conneaut • August 14: Ashtabula • August 16: Jefferson • August 17: Madison • August 18: Painesville • August 19: Chardon • August 23: Warren • August 25: Ravenna • August 28: Canton • September 1: Wooster • September 2: Ashland

The Burt & Robinson troupe left Hamlin Shephard's farm, near Strawton, Indiana, on April 15, 1858, and gave its first performance at Nobleville.[5] According to a modern account, the contingent featured the following performers:

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[1] *New York Clipper*, September 26, 1857. Certain details from Stuart Thayer, *Annals of the American Circus 1793-1860*, pp 409-410.

[2] *New York Clipper*, September 13, 1884.

[3] Playbill in *The New York Clipper*, April 23, 1892, cited in the notes of George L. Chindahl (collection of the Circus World Museum); clipping not seen by the author.

[4] *Annals of the American Circus 1793-1860*, pp. 621-622.

[5] Typed vertical file card by Circus World Museum, date and author not given; also the source of the list of performers. The name "Shephard" is spelled differently elsewhere. • The April 15 date is at variance with that in the Thayer schedule.

> Walter Aymar (principal rider). Charles Brown, Charles Davis (Mexican Charley), and Harry Everts (clowns). Mrs. Johnny Booker and Mrs. George Choate (entry riders). Frank Drew (rider who quit the second week).

Soon, an epidemic of smallpox swept through the circus hands, and nearly everyone suffered,[1] or perhaps a few were afflicted; accounts differ. By late August, the two partners, Burt and Robinson, were fighting with each other, having divided their interests.[2]

Circus historian Stuart Thayer synopsized the events of the year:[3]

> A. S. Burt had been Robinson's agent or manager for five years. In 1858 he became a partner in "Burt & Robinson's Old Fashioned Circus." Burt was manager and Walter Aymar the principal rider. Aymar was the first front rank rider Robinson ever had. Henry Gardner was the clown.
>
> They had wintered in Strawtown, Indiana, just outside Indianapolis, and opened the season in Noblesville. Unfortunately, one of the bandsmen brought smallpox onto the show and five members contracted it. One of them died in Crawfordsville.
>
> Some time after the first week in June, Burt and Robinson had a falling out and split the show. Each then proceeded with his own company. However, they patched up their differences ("kissed and made up," a Cincinnati paper said), and from September 4 to the end of the tour they operated as one circus again.
>
> They went into Noblesville for the winter, and Robinson organized "Yankee Robinson's Double Show" for a southern tour. "Circus and Theatre," was the way he advertised, and the presentation consisted of about half of each genre. Minstrels, musicians, dancers, a drama and half-a-dozen circus performers made up the cast. William Pastor's was the only name of substance involved. This creation left Noblesville in October, 1858, and was gone for over a year. They visited Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia, and then moved north and finally veered south toward Charleston.

As if the events were not difficult enough, there was a further element of tragedy, as reported by the *New York Clipper,* June 12, 1858:

> A terrible accident happened to Yankee Robinson's only son, Silas, while riding in the cavalcade, Shelbyville, Indiana. His horse fell in the ring, rolling over the boy, who was supposed to be dead for several hours. He was still unconscious at last accounts, but hopes were entertained for his recovery.

Fortunately, Silas did recover, and went on to remain in the show with his father for many years to come.

Yankee Robinson's Big Show (1859)

Yankee Robinson's Big Show featured Robinson as proprietor and A.S. Burt as agent.[4] The roster for that year included William Crosby; Harry Everts; William Crosby; Master Fitzgibbons; Frank Scott; Master George Robinson; Young Metz; Mrs. Yankee Robinson; and Mrs. Miller. The planned route was as follows, including many stops in the South, this being a partial listing with many gaps, mostly smaller towns, omitted:

> *Georgia:* February 18-19: Augusta
> *South Carolina:* February 28: Charleston.
> *North Carolina:* March 24: Winston.
> *South Carolina:* March 28: Darlington • April 6: Winnsboro • April ?: Columbia • April 18: Charlotte • April 21: Salisbury
> *North Carolina:* April 23: Salem
> Virginia: May 3: Lynchburg • May 18: Petersburg • May 20-21: Richmond • May 25: Waynesboro • May 26: Staunton • June 6: Winchester
> *Pennsylvania:* June 8: Chambersburg • June 9: Shippensburg • June 11: Carlisle • June 14: Harrisburg • June 17-18: Reading • June 27: Wilkes-Barre
> *New York:* July 4 :Binghamton • August 13: Ithaca
> *Ohio:* September 7: Mansfield
> *Virginia:* September 17: Charleston[5]
> *North Carolina:* October ?: Raleigh • November 8: Whitehall
> *South Carolina:* November 22-26: Charleston
> *Georgia:* December 20-22: Savannah

Stuart Thayer told of an innovation introduced by Robinson in 1859:[6]

> In 1858 Jerry Mabie spent $1,500 to provide a sleeping tent for 70 men, a dining tent in which to feed them, a cook wagon containing a stove, and a horse tent. By doing this he lowered his hotel and livery costs by about $5,000, less the cost of food and fodder. In time all circuses adopted the practice. Mabie still put his performers and staff up in hotels. In the next season, 1859, Yankee Robinson went Mabie one better; he boarded all his employees on the lot.

An announcement in the Chambersburg, Virginia, *Valley Spirit,* June 1, 1859, advised that Yankee Robinson's Double Show was coming to Chambersburg for one day only, on the 8th. Featured were Arabian horses and a few other attractions, a modest troupe.

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[1] *Ibid.*

[2] *New York Clipper,* September 4, 1857.

[3] *Annals of the American Circus 1793-1860,* part of a Robinson account, pp 409-410.

[4] Stuart Thayer, *Annals of the American Circus 1793-1860,* p. 622, citing the *New York Clipper,* September 24, 1859.

[5] The present Charleston, *West* Virginia.

[6] Stuart Thayer, *Traveling Showmen: The American Circus before the Civil War,* pp. 19-20.

A later account told of Yankee Robinson's activities in that politically pivotal year:[1]

> In the season of 1859 he started from Charleston, S.C., headed north, with an augmented company of Jonahs[2] and 60 horses. He turned back at St. Lawrence, N.Y., and when at Raleigh, N.C., whether from the malign influence of Jonahs or not, John Brown raided Harper's Ferry [on the night of October 16].
>
> From that day out the season was a failure. Wm. June, the agent, was mobbed at Grahamville, S.C., by a vigilance committee, and came within one vote of being whipped "forty lashes save one on the bare back, covered with tar and cotton and sent back to Charleston." The single vote which saved June and his assistant from indignity was that of a brother Mason.
>
> When the news reached Charleston, a "committee" started for Robinson, having evil designs on his person; but Yankee took to his heels, being apprised of his danger by friends, and ran 12 miles into the woods. Sending back word from his hiding place to learn whether he was more scared than hurt, he was advised to 'skeddadle,' which he did, thereby losing the savings of a busy life, and never recovering so much as a wheel or a hoop....
>
> Robinson was to remark concerning the John Brown excitement, "I had to run away and leave an outfit which cost me $40,000."

Subsequently, *New York Clipper* printed an account of the fracas, stating that the riot had occurred at Whitehall, North Carolina, on November 8.[3] From available information it seemed that a drunk man named Grantham, with his friends in tow, attempted to force his way into the circus without a ticket, and was stopped by the doorman. A desperate fight involving Bowie knives and pistols then ensued between the circus personnel and the Grantham rowdies, and two men were killed—one a brother of Grantham and the other a schoolmaster. One of the circus men, named Robinson (whether it was Yankee or someone else was not stated), was seriously stabbed.

Concerning the final days of Robinson in the South, Stuart Thayer commented:[4]

> October 16, 1859, was the date of John Brown's raid at Harper's Ferry. The Yankee Robinson show was in Raleigh, North Carolina that day. Robinson later said business fell off sharply after Brown's raid. They played Charleston for three weeks and went to Savannah, expecting to be there two weeks. They played but three days.
>
> What transpired in Savannah is still not clear. Contemporary references to such things were not widely publicized. Apparently, a group from Charleston, objecting to Yankee's name, followed the circus, threatening trouble. Robinson himself took to the woods and it's assumed his employees did the same. They never saw a bit of their property again. Even the New York *Clipper*, always looking for scandal, merely remarked that the show had folded.[5]:

This was a year of multiple tragedies. On November 14, 1859, his second wife died at Columbia, South Carolina, by which time the union had produced two children, a son named Silas (after the name of Yankee's first child), and a daughter born in 1853.[6] Mrs. Robinson was buried in Columbia.

Apparently, Yankee Robinson's Amphitheatre, advertised to open in Charleston on November 21, was conducted in one way or another,[7] although renegade players may have been involved—perhaps a catchpenny operation. A notice advised that it had "no connection with the Robinson of [recent] North Carolina accounts."[8]

As historian Thayer noted, the history of the fall of the Robinson show in the South is not at all clear. Another source stated that performances continued in Savannah through December 22, and on the 23rd the properties were destroyed.

Later, he married for the third and last time, to a daughter of Deacon Babcock of Chillicothe, Ohio.[9] Idelle May Robinson, a daughter described as "beautiful and accomplished," who died at the age of 19 in 1889, would have been from this union.[10]

Robinson in the Early 1860s

Yankee Robinson's Great Troupe (1860)

The brave title of the 1860 show, including *Great Troupe*, belies the problems of the year. At a later time

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[1] Recollection published in the Baraboo *Republic*, May 14, 1884.

[2] Nineteenth-century term for persons believed to bring bad luck; *i.e.*, losers, ne'er-do-wells, etc.

[3] News carried in the issue of November 26, 1859.

[4] *Annals of the American Circus 1793-1860*, pp 409-410.

[5] *New York Clipper*, January 7, 1860.

[6] By 1884 his daughter from this marriage lived in South Bend, Indiana, and was known as Mrs. Bulla.

[7] Notes by Tom Parkinson preserved by the Circus World Museum.

[8] Notes by Tom Parkinson preserved by the Circus World Museum.

[9] *New York Clipper*, April 20, 1889.

[10] *New York Clipper*, April 20, 1889. • An item in *The Billboard*, January 4, 1936, noted that a fire had destroyed the old L.R. Ripley farm house on the Utica-Frankfort Road, a place that had once served as the winter quarters of Yankee Robinson, who was said to have been Ripley's son-in-law. How Ripley's daughter fits in with the three women Robinson is known to have married—none surnamed Ripley—is not known. Robinson's first wife was from upstate New York, the daughter of Silas *Nye* of Pittsford, the latter town being distant from Utica or Frankfort.

Yankee Robinson supplied this personal reminiscence, which can be viewed as *definitive* for the circumstances mentioned:[1]

A Reminiscence

It is well known that I was expelled from the South soon after the John Brown raid, and all my property confiscated, escaping by the "skin of my teeth" from an awful death.

The next spring, 1860, demanded all my wits to institute another show, so I could support and educate my motherless children (my wife having died November 14, 1859). I had a friend living in Strawtown, Indiana, in the person of Ham.[2] Sheppard (since assassinated), who came to my aid and agreed to furnish a few horses, wagons, etc., if I could raise enough besides to enable me to take the road with a little dramatic company, in all 30 horses and a tent.

Swinging my memory around the circle, I remembered a horse trader that had traded horses with my boss hostler the year before at DeRuyter, Madison County, New York, who subsequently followed my show with a small drove of "plugs," or "trading stock," and a lot of grooms, trading gypsy fashion, and this man was the late Daniel Scott.[3]

I wrote to him, early in April, 1860, telling him what I wanted. He came to Elmira, New York, where I was stopping, and I hired of him 13 horses, harness, a carriage, and a buggy, and as an equivalent sold him the candy stand privilege.

The season was very successful, as I appeared at each and every performance on the stage, in my best Yankee characters—no ring performance. We disbanded at his town, DeRuyter, with the property in his possession, that my friend Sheppard furnished.

Stuart Thayer provides a personnel and route list:[4]

Selected personnel:[5] Frank Phelps; Miss Isabel; Miss Victoria; Yankee Robinson; Master Charles.

Route:

New York: July 18-19: Albany • August 4: Utica • August 25: Clyde • August 27: Seneca Falls • August 28: Waterloo • August 29: Geneva • August 30-31: Canandaigua • October 16-17: Cortland • November 6: Elmira. Robinson took a hall show out of this city.

The Next Season (1861)

Continuing with Yankee Robinson's reminiscence, into 1861:[6]

A Reminiscence

The next season [1861] Mr. Scott furnished all the outfit, except the scenery, engraving, &c. (he always had me boss the style and amount of printing), and I was to run all the risk of losing, he to have a share of the profits!

This season was disastrous for nearly all showmen, as everybody was talking of "going to the front."[7] The first of September following, we were in Michigan—business simply nothing—could hardly get enough money to pay our way from town to town; and the company was very small at that.

I though of disbanding, but Scott proposed to the company to work for their board, and we would travel eastward, and so *work our way* home. With this little expense we lost money, and finally disbanded in Hornellsville, New York.

Another cause of our doing such bad business was because we had a devil in the show, "back caping"[8] the show the moment we entered a town. Not content with doing the company all the hurt he could do to "outsiders," but he "deviled" Scott night and day, pouring into his ear that I was "incompetent in every particular," etc. *He* was the Simon-pure man—*he* had the thing to make money, etc., etc., and like our modern Mephistopheles, with the present "management" (!),[9] so far succeeded as to make Scott believe to the tune of backing him in a hall show, which collapsed in a few days, at a great loss, comparatively speaking. But, I must go back.

Before Scott organized the hall show I settled up with him and found a balance against me of $2,950. Scott said he would throw off the $900, and I gave him notes for the balance, $2,050, and we separated with the understanding that if I ever got in funds I was to send it to him, which of course he never expected to get, and he felt sure enough of making a "pile" in his new hall show under a new regime.

I had given him my views of the show business at large a good many times, causes and effects, etc., and told his "hall show" future almost to a nicety, only the show burst quicker than I expected, and he lost a good deal more than I supposed he would venture.

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[1] *Saint Paul Dispatch*, July 7, 1875, as part of an article, "The Circus That Way," which consisted of a lengthy letter by his son, Silas F. Robinson, which included "a reminiscence of Old Yankee Robinson's first meeting and business connections with the late Dan Scott," such reminiscence written in the first person by Yankee himself.

[2] This may refer to a black person whose countenance was dark, like Ham of the Old Testament.

[3] Scott died in 1875, the year Yankee Robinson penned this reminiscence.

[4] Stuart Thayer, *Annals of the American Circus 1793-1860*, pp. 622-623.

[5] As noticed in the *Utica Observer*, July 26, 1860.

[6] *Saint Paul Dispatch*, July 7, 1875.

[7] The Civil War began in the second week of April, 1861, about the same time as circuses and traveling shows were preparing for their touring season.

[8] "Cappers" (with two p's) and "back cappers" were also the nemesis of three-card monte tables, roulette, and other gambling operations and thought to take for themselves a slice of the profit of the deal.

[9] This comment on "present 'management'" refers to a later situation, 1875, when Robinson was reminiscing. At that time Major Dike was sapping the strength of Robinson's company (see notes under 1875 in the present text).

Several notices from the *New York Clipper* give glimpses of the year and include a mention of DeRuyter (putative home of Yankee Robinson two years later in 1863, when he issued Civil War tokens):

> **April 27, 1861**
>
> Yankee Robinson Theatre and Circus Company will leave DeRuyter, near Syracuse, NY, on the first of May.
>
> **July 20, 1861**
>
> Yankee Robinson Show was in Adrian, Michigan, on the 11th, afternoon attendance slim, evening, tent filled.
>
> **August 31, 1861**
>
> Yankee Robinson's Double Show exhibited at Flint, Michigan, on the 19th. They had previously showed at Saginaw City, Bay City, and East Saginaw, it being the only show in that region this season, and the only canvas show ever at Bay City.
>
> They gave the people an agreeable surprise, and did well pecuniarily. They intend to scour Michigan and Indiana, then collapse for a while.
>
> The Minstrel Company connected with it numbers the following — P.H. Lamon, A. Pearce, C. Williams, C. Royes, C. Cook, C. Kinney, A. Beebe, and Martin C. Seamon.

The Continuing Story (1862)

Continuing with Yankee Robinson's reminiscence, into 1862:[1]

> **A Reminiscence**
>
> As spring began to show itself, I was pondering what to do in the season of '62. I went to see Scott, and suggested that as the war was now a settled matter, and government money would soon be in circulation, in lieu of stamps, shin plasters, etc., that we start a similar show out again. I did not make any impression as "the burnt child," etc. I would take no "noes" to my importunities, and to "shake" me he said he would make me a present of my notes and $300 in cash if I would go off and leave him.
>
> I told him if he would lend me $500 cash, and keep his notes, I would buy a magic lantern and go room showing. The offer had the desired effect—I prevailed—went to Hornellsville, after ordering printing, etc., repainted the wagons, and opened early in May. We literally struck oil—a flowing well—which continued to flow as long as we continued in partnership, '67 inclusive.

"He made his first appearance as a star at Grover's Theatre, Washington, D.C., in 1862," a contemporary account noted,[2] probably in reference to the colder season, while a later story included this regarding the summer tour:[3] "In 1862…Dan Shelby was the principal comedian. They ran 34 horses, and traveled the entire season in New York."

On Stage in Cincinnati in 1863

The pages of the *Cincinnati Daily Gazette* chronicle the appearance of Yankee Robinson on stage in the city in late February and early March, 1863. A few selected advertisements and news items are given (from *thousands* in print), day by day, with notices regarding Yankee Robinson listed first, a "you are there" scenario of the time, quite appealing to me as I spent a week or more browsing through a large file of this paper.

It is likely that his Cincinnati engagement was part of his winter tour, which probably included just a few companions, if any, instead enlisting the aid of local players at various stands, and rehearsing the plays on site before they were performed.

The accompanying acts, such as champion skater Fuller, were separate and unaffiliated entertainers. The "Big Show, Triad, Past-Present-Future" elements advertised on Civil War tokens of the 1863 date do not seem to be related to his winter performance in Cincinnati and may have characterized his summer traveling troupe. Of the tokens more will be related.

His Cincinnati appearances, as related in print at the time they occurred:

February 20, 1863 (Friday)

> **Advertisements**
>
> *NATIONAL THEATER.* Geo. Fuller, lessee and manager. E.C. Grierson, stage manager.... Last night but one of the wonderful Belgian Giant, MONS. BIHIN. Friday evening, February 20, the performance will commence with the beautiful drama, THE DUEL IN THE SNOW, after which JACK AND THE BEAN STALK, gobble-up-up, the Giant. Mons. Bihin. The distinguished comedian, YANKEE ROBINSON, has been engaged and will shortly appear.
>
> *S.T.-1860-X. Drake's Plantation Bitters.* They purify, strengthen, and invigorate.... Sold by all grocers, druggists, hotels, and saloons.[4]
>
> *Grover and Baker's Family and Manufacturing Sewing Machines.* These machines have taken the first premium at the state fairs.... Office, 58 West Fourth Street.
>
> *Large Arrivals of Spring Goods* at L.C. Hopkins & Co.'s, corner Fifth and Vine Streets, Cincinnati....[5]

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[1] *Saint Paul Dispatch*, July 7, 1875.

[2] "Fayette Lodavick Robinson," *New York Clipper*, December 30, 1865.

[3] Recollection published in the Baraboo *Republic*, May 14, 1884.

[4] See Adventure No. 41 for more about Drake's Plantation Bitters.

[5] This firm issued encased postage stamps in 1862.

The National Theatre on Sycamore Street, between Third and Fourth streets, Cincinnati, where Yankee Robinson performed on stage. The theatre opened on July 3, 1837, and quickly became the venue for Shakespearean dramas, traveling troupes, and other entertainers. The stone front was added in 1856. (*Cincinnati the Queen City*, published in 1912, by which time the building was used as a commercial warehouse)

Rich French silks, spring styles. Spring dress goods, poplins, Mozambiques, challi de laines.

Antioch College of Yellow Springs, Greene County, O., will open its winter term on Tuesday, January 6th.[1] This well known college offers to young persons of both sexes in all branches comprising ordinary Academic and Collegiate Courses, at economical rates....

Pike's Opera House. Last night of LES MISERABLES. Grand Dramatic Entertainment, Saturday evening, February 21st, under auspices of the St. George's Benevolent Society, for the benefit of the poor Lancashire Cotton Spinners. 50 cents each to all parts of the house. Grand Matinee! Tomorrow afternoon at 2 o'clock, when will be presented the fairy spectacle of CINDERELLA. Admission 15 cents.

Smith & Ditson's Hall. Second week of Goodwin & Wilder's Polyorama of the War. Immense success! House crowded to overflowing at each exhibition!... Admission 25 cents, children 15 cents.

News of the Day

General Pope's Report: The Fitz John Porter trial has fully substantiated the statement of Gen. Pope that the hearty cooperation of General McClellan and Porter, and some other officers of the Army of the Potomac who followed their example, or acted by their orders, would have made his operations in Virginia successful. This has raised the reputation of General Pope's generalship.... One of the conspicuous features of his report is its liberal distribution of censure. Another is the elaborate exhibit that Gen. Pope had at all times a perfect comprehension of the situation, and of the measures it required. One of the singular features is that he informs Gen. Halleck that he was appointed General-in-Chief because Gen. McClellan had shown an indisposition to cooperate with Gen. Pope's army in operations against Richmond. But the most melancholy feature is the showing of Gen. McClellan's unfaithfulness; and the reflection that after this had resulted in the disasters before Washington, the President succumbed, and gave him the command on his own terms. The neglect and sacrifice of Harper's Ferry, the indirect campaign in Maryland, the repulse by an inferior force at Antietam, the safe withdrawal of Lee's army, and the stubborn delay which lost the fall campaign, were the natural results of this weakness....

About Paper Blockades: The rebel journals ought really to agree upon the manner in which they shall discuss the blockade. It is somewhat bewildering to find in the *Richmond Enquirer* for February 6th such a confession as this: "Unhappily, we seldom receive a hint of the general news of European movements except through journals of New York. We are in Yankee outer darkness."...

The Sanitary Commission yesterday shipped about 100 boxes and barrels of supplies, mostly vegetables, to Memphis, Tenn., on board the steamer *Tycoon*.

Smash-up on the Little Miami. Two freight trains on the Little Miami Railroad came in collision on Wednesday night near London, demolishing five or six of the cars and injuring both locomotives....

Steep. The eating houses have advanced the price of coffee one hundred percent; that is to say, instead of five cents per cup, they charge ten.... The best quality Rio coffee is selling at 34 cents per pound. At 40 cents per pound the actual cost of a cup of coffee, exclusive of milk and sugar, is *one cent*. In New York and Boston, tea and coffee are furnished at from three to five cents. If the patrons of Cincinnati eating houses will give coffee the go by for a while, or what would be better, find some place where the imposition is not practiced, the price would soon come down.

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[1] A "stock" advertisement that had been allowed to run past its effective date.

February 23, 1863 (Monday)

Advertisements

NATIONAL THEATER. First night of the celebrated comedian, YANKEE ROBINSON. Monday evening February 23 will be acted the patriotic drama, THE DAYS OF '76, Darius Dutton: [played by] Yankee Robinson. And for the second time, LANDSHARKS AND SEAGULLS.

At Greenwood Hall, Mechanics' Institute. Free lecture. Prof. T. Fish, of New York, will give one of a course of lectures on physiology, commencing Tuesday evening.... The first lecture will be devoted to the discussion of Kinesopathy, or Swedish Movement Cure. All should come. Front seats are reserved for the ladies and those accompanying them. A fine large painting, a complete panorama, is used for the anatomical explanations and private lectures.

Attention Sutlers! Dixon's Blackberry Carminative is being extensively used in the Army, and effecting wonderful and speedy cures of dysentery and diarrhea.... It is, emphatically, The Soldier's Friend. Sutlers and the trade supplied on liberal terms by William F. Davidson, NE corner Fifth and Main.

News of the Day

The Great Conscription, Its Necessity: The Conscription bill, which has passed the Senate, is the first approach the government has made to a rational system of raising troops to carry on the war. The whole system of volunteering was essentially and radically wrong. It compelled the generous, the free-hearted and patriotic, to bear the burdens of the war while the selfish were left to escape with impunity....

Important from Vicksburg. Advices from the fleet off Vicksburg to the evening of the 18th furnish the agreeable information that the initial step, inaugurating active hostilities, commenced that day. It is presumed that the grand attack will soon be made....

Arrest of a Correspondent by Order of Gen. Hooker. The correspondent of the *Philadelphia Inquirer,* with Gen. Sigel's command, has been arrested by order of Gen. Hooker at Stafford Court House, and taken to Falmouth. He is charged with having sent incorrect and exaggerated reports of recent movements, and also with furnishing contraband information for publication in that paper.

The LaCrosse Republican says the Bank of LaCrosse is in possession of the sheriff, under attachment for the recovery of a bank collection of $21. He found the available cash assets to consist of $2. The Wisconsin Bank Comptroller's report exhibits this bank as having a circulation of $25,000,[1] secured by $25,000 six-percent bonds, and personal bonds for $6,250.

The Galveston (Texas) News of the 12th ultimo says: On Saturday last, Galveston was bombarded from the Gulf shore by five federal steamers, from three to half-past four p.m. The whole number of shells thrown was 167....

A Question for Kentuckians: The Union papers of Kentucky, and the Union members of the Legislature, speak of the late gathering of Copperheads at Frankfort, as a rebel convention.... A short time since there was a municipal election in Covington, Ky. One of the tickets was composed of Union men, and the other of Secessionists....

From San Francisco, February 21: Sailed, steamer *St. Louis,* carrying passengers and $946,000 in treasure for England, and $242,000 for New York.

February 24, 1863 (Tuesday)

Advertisements

NATIONAL THEATER. Second night of the celebrated comedian, YANKEE ROBINSON. Tuesday evening will be performed for the second time, THE DAYS OF '76, Darius Dutton: Yankee Robinson. To conclude with the thrilling drama of GIPSY FARMER.

Union Meeting. Patriots! Stand by the Union. There will be a grand rally of the loyal Union citizens of Indiana on Thursday the twenty-sixth of February, 1863.... Arrangements have been perfected for half fare on all the railroads.

Cincinnati Female Seminary, corner Seventh and Mound streets, is now entering upon its spring and summer session. French and German are introduced as part of the course.... Apply to the Seminary at any hour. Geo. M. Maxwell, principal.

For Sale. 500 acres of excellent farming lands.... Price $2.25 to $7 per acre.... J.C. Hanover & Co., Real Estate Brokers, 57 West Third Street.

News of the Day

Stand by the Union. At a meeting of the officers of the 116th O.V.I., held on the evening of the 10th inst., at Romney, Va., the following officers were appointed a committee.... The committee reported, on the evening of the 12th inst., the following resolutions.... *Resolved, 1st.* That nothing but "unconditional surrender" will answer the demands of the true soldier and patriot. *Resolved, 2d.* That we are still actuated by the same motives that induced us to first lift our arms against rebellion....

A Rebel Sympathizing Lad. The Marquis of Hartington was an invited guest at a party given by August Belmont, on Tuesday evening. He had the bad manners on the occasion to display a rebel badge on his coat. Mr. Belmont, however, as soon as he discovered it, notified the sprig of nobility to take it off at once, or he would be ejected from the premises instanter....

An Illinois officer and life-long Democrat, Col. Frank T. Sherman...has written a very strong letter to a friend in Chicago, in which he says, "The rebels are becoming more confident every day of success in dividing our beloved country, from the fact of political differences in the North, and especially in the states of Illinois and Indiana."...

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[1] Total face value of its own paper money put into circulation.

River News. The weather yesterday was fine and clear and rather cool. The river was slowly receding and had fallen about 20 inches in the last 48 hours. There was a depth of 33 feet of water in the channel yesterday at noon....

February 25, 1863 (Wednesday)

Advertisements

NATIONAL THEATER. Third night.... Wednesday evening, February 25, will be presented the celebrated Yankee Prize drama, SAM PATCH IN FRANCE. Sam Patch: Yankee Robinson. And the beautiful drama of THE MOMENTOUS QUESTION. A grand performance every Saturday afternoon. In rehearsal several new dramas in which Yankee Robinson will appear."

Just received: The National Almanac and Annual Record for 1863.... Published in one volume, 12mo, upward of 500 pages, bound in boards, price $1.... Applegate & Co., Booksellers and Publishers, 43 Main Street.

Eureka! Eureka! A successful coal oil burner, without chimney, found at last! Just the thing for hand lamps and lanterns.... McHenry & Carson's, No. 162 Main Street.

News of the Day

Afternoon Dispatches. New York—the *Times'* special from Washington states that Gen. Hooker has been in the city, and was today consulting with the President and Secretary of War. Late accounts from the army indicate greatly improved discipline, and give promise of a state of efficiency never before known here....

Speeches. As announced in the *Gazette* of yesterday, we give this morning the conclusion of the proceedings of the Union Meeting at the Opera House and a report of the second meeting held at Melodeon Hall, which were unavoidably crowded out of that issue. We are satisfied that the eloquent speeches of Messrs. Wright, Wallace, Dennison, and Lane, in behalf of the Union and the gallant soldiers who are fighting in its defense, will be read with as much interest as they would have been yesterday. We give also, below, T. Buchanan Read's beautiful poem, "The Oath," which was read to both audiences by the author, with marked effect....

A man named Thomas Woods was arrested yesterday and lodged in the Ninth Street Station House, on the charge of horse stealing.

Steamboats Sold. The steamer *Armada* was sold yesterday to Captains Dusouchet and Throop for $40,000. The *Gray Fox* was sold to parties in Pittsburg for $9,500.

February 26, 1863 (Thursday)

Advertisements

NATIONAL THEATER. Fourth night of the successful engagement of the celebrated comedian, YANKEE ROBINSON, who is now filling the National Theater with delighted and crowded audiences. Thursday evening, February 26, HERMIT OF THE ROCKS. Moderation Easterbrook: Yankee Robinson. YANKEE IN CHINA. Ebin Pettingill: Yankee Robinson. To conclude with the TWO BUZZARDS, a tremendous bill of fare for Saturday afternoon.

Wheeler & Wilson's Sewing Machines awarded First Premium at World's Fair, London, 1862, all the machines of the world competing. Wm. Sumner & Co., Pike's Opera House, Cincinnati.

Machinery. Do you want planing machines, patent siding saws, sash and molding machines, patent scroll saws, tenoning and mortising machines, patent stave machines.... Every description of wood-working machinery. J.A. Fay & Co., corner John and Front Streets.

News of the Day

Letter from Connecticut. New Haven. This venerable city has been greatly excited by the doings of the recent "Hartford Convention" culminating in the nomination of an open traitor—an avowed sympathizer of Jeff. Davis, for governor. This has placed the great cause of loyalty or disloyalty, fair and square before the people, and on the 1st of April the old State of Connecticut is to show her position in the great struggle for national life....

The French Invasion of Mexico. The people of this country will prepare no tears for French reverses in Mexico. The Emperor has announced that the object of the invasion is to check the expansion of the United States. The Mexican Republic is to be crushed by foreign conquest, to set up a French barrier against us....

The Polish Insurrection. At the last dates from Europe the Polish Insurrection had increased in magnitude, and the insurgents had formed a provisional government....

Stealing Photograph Albums. A man named Wm. Getz was arrested and taken to the Hammond Street station last evening, charged with stealing some photograph albums from Robert Clarke & Co.'s book store. Capt. Wm. Glass of this city was robbed yesterday morning of a gold watch and chain valued at $200. A man named George Anderson was arrested yesterday at Newport on suspicion of being the perpetrator of the robbery.

Financial and Commercial. Wednesday p.m. Gold did not undergo any material change in New York today, the market opening quiet at $71^1/_2$ and closing at $71^1/_4$ to $71^1/_2$.... Demand notes closed at $171^1/_4$ .... Money [to be loaned at interest] continues plenty, with a moderate demand, and the market is east at 8 to 10 percent, the inside rate for choice names. Bankers are buying Kentucky money at 7 percent premium.

February 27, 1863 (Friday)

Advertisements

NATIONAL THEATER. Benefit of YANKEE ROBINSON, who is now filling the National Theater with delighted audiences. Friday evening, February 27, will be performed the drama (founded on incidents of the present war), BATTLE OF MUMFREESBORO [*sic;* a misspelling].[1] Pennaroyal Plummer: Yankee Robinson. And the drama of PEOPLE'S LAWYER. Solon Shingle:[2] Yankee Robinson....

Pike's Opera House. Last night of the spectacular play, the SEA OF ICE, OR THE GOLD SEEKER OF MEXICO. The performance will conclude with a Grand Divertissement by the ZAVITOWSKI TROUPE.

Carpeting, oil cloths, and window shades, at Snowdon & Otte's, 175 Main Street between Fourth and Fifth.

Proposals. ARMY STORES. Bids received until 11 a.m., February 27, 1863...for: 3,000 barrels Extra Superfine Flour, lined; 300 bushels White Beans, in barrels, lined; 10,000 pounds rice, East India or Carolina, in barrels, lined; 200 pounds Black Tea in strong boxes (true Tea); 15,000 pounds Rio Coffee, in double sacks; 4,000 pounds Rio Coffee, roasted, not ground, in barrels, lined, with sample Green Coffee; 1,000 gallons Vinegar, in barrels, taking 28 to 29 grains Bicarb Soda to neutralize one fluid ounce of the Vinegar; 2,500 pounds Star Candies, full weight in boxes; 8,000 pounds Soap, in boxes; 571 gallons Molasses, in barrels; 10,000 pounds Dried Apples (quarters) in barrels, full head lined. Payments to be made in such government funds as may be supplied by the Treasury for that purpose. Packages marked as may be required, and to be ready for delivery in Cincinnati, Ohio, by March 2d, 1863. B. DuBarry, Capt. and U.S., U.S.A.

News of the Day

Guerrillas Near Corinth. The army of Gen. Grant being now entirely withdrawn from its inland position, south of the line of the Memphis & Charleston Railroad, Corinth becomes again an advance post which can be approached almost with impunity by the partisans of the enemy. Only yesterday, Capt. G.E. Taylor, of Ohio, belong to "Birges' Sharpshooters," was driven in from Danville, where he was confiscating a tannery to prevent the leather therein from falling into the hands of the rebels. Having but a small party with him, he was obliged to fall back to his camp upon the appearance of 45 guerrillas. The rebels and our cavalry keep up a kind of old school day style "prisoner's base" operations....

There was a great Union meeting at Indianapolis yesterday. Thirty thousand men were in council. The city was literally full of earnest, patriotic citizens....

News from Vicksburg. Camp near Vicksburg, Feb. 16, via Cairo, Feb. 26. Nothing has yet been heard from the ram, *Queen of the West,* which started several nights ago for the Red River. About a dozen rebel vessels were known to be up that stream, and her mission will be one of the greatest importance. Already much suffering is known to exist in Vicksburg in consequence of our ram cutting off their entire river communication. Deserters state that unless they have relief speedily, the place will of necessity be evacuated. A rebel lieutenant, while speaking of the matter yesterday to our officers, wept, saying that it was too bad to see brave soldiers thus in danger of being disgraced by starvation, and not allowed to defend their homes. There is no doubt whatever that these stories of starvation are true.

New Rebel Raid in Kentucky. A telegram from Lexington says that passengers have arrived in that city from Richmond who report that Gen. Pegram with 1,200 mounted rebels advanced upon that place last evening. Today refugees arrived who stated that heavy firing was heard between Richmond and the Kentucky River at noon....

February 28, 1863 (Saturday)

Advertisements

NATIONAL THEATER, Sycamore Street between 3rd and 4th.[3] Grand Afternoon Performance: YANKEE ROBINSON in two of his great characters, "Sam Patch" and "Ebin Pettingale," in "Yankee in China." Admission to all parts of the house, only 15 cents. SATURDAY EVENING, February 28, will be acted the drama of THE AMERICAN FARMER. Jonathan Ploughboy: Yankee Robinson. After which, THE BATTLE OF MURFREESBORO. Pennaroyal Plummer: Yankee Robinson. To conclude with the farce, HERCULES, KING OF CLUBS.

FRESH SHAD. The fresh shad season has commenced at Maltby's Oyster Depot, No. 11 West Fifth Street. Received daily by the Adams Express.

REMOVAL: Ivens & Co., will remove, 1st March, to the Large Hall over 68 and 70 West Fourth Street, Opposite Pike's Opera House. The Finest Cloak Room in the United States.

GOLD AND SILVER and U.S. Demand Notes wanted at the highest market rates. Premium paid for Kentucky and Indiana money. Paddock's Bank Mirror—Monthly at $1.50; semi-monthly $2.00. Paddock's Description of Genuine Bank-notes and Coin Chart free to all yearly subscribers. Paddock & Co. S.E. corner Third & Walnut.

DR. B.P. BELKNAP, Dentist.[4] Teeth extracted, in most cases without pain, by the least danger, by a new process which is invigorating to the nervous system, and prescribed by no other dentist! Office, 137 West 4th Street.

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[1] Apparently based upon the recent Battle of *Murfreesboro.*

[2] A sophisticated name for a people's lawyer. Probably, few in the audience realized that in history Solon was the author of the legal code of the golden age of Athens and was that city's "dictator" (not a negative, simply the name of his position). Solon repealed Draco's "Draconian" code, circa 6th century B.C.

[3] The items for February 28 are from the *Cincinnati Enquirer.* Although the *Cincinnati Daily Gazette* was published on February 28, there was no notice or advertisement published concerning Robinson, perhaps an omission by error. Note that in the *Enquirer* the title of the theatre is given slightly differently. Murfreesboro is spelled correctly.

[4] Issuer of Civil War tokens.

News of the Day

Fuller's National Theatre. Yankee Robinson, the popular comedian, is still drawing crowded houses. There will be a matinee this afternoon at which he will appear. He will also be on hand in the evening in his best parts.

37th Congress—Second Session . Senate. Mr. Collamer, from the Committee on Post Offices and Roads, reported back the bill to allow the Covington and Cincinnati Bridge Company to build a bridge across the Ohio River, at not less than 100 feet above low-water mark, with 200 feet span.

The Siege of Vicksburg as Viewed from a Rebel Quarter....

March 2, 1863 (Monday)

Advertisements

NATIONAL THEATER. Seventh night of the successful engagement of the favorite Yankee Comedian, YANKEE ROBINSON. Monday evening, March 2, will be presented the drama of NEW ENGLAND IN 1800. Lot Sap Sago: Yankee Robinson. To be followed by the popular drama, SAM PATCH IN FRANCE. Sam Patch: Yankee Robinson. To conclude with THE DEAD SHOT, in which Miss Dillingham will make her first appearance....[1]

Over $7,000,000 Represented. Evans & Lindsey, general insurance agents. No. 65 West Third Street. Building of the "Ohio Valley Bank." Cincinnati, O.

Steamboats for Cairo, Columbus, and Memphis. Will leave on this day, 28th [*sic*], at 4 p.m. Steamer *Diadem*, Millar, master, will leave as above....

News of the Day

The National Theater under its new management by Fuller appears to be rapidly regaining its old popularity in the estimation of the public. The celebrated comedian, Yankee Robinson, is the reigning star there at the present time, and appears this evening in 'The Hermit of the Rocks,' and 'The Yankee Inclined [*sic*],' both of them first-class pieces.

Letter from Gen. Grant's Army. Young's Point, La., above Vicksburg, February 17: It was expected last evening that the *Queen of the West* would arrive from below and give us the particulars relative to the affairs on the Red River and its vicinity. Up to the time of writing she has not been heard from.... In recent high wind some of the boats broke loose from their moorings and drifted out into the river. Without steam and perfectly helpless they were floating rapidly toward Vicksburg, when some more fortunate boats went to their relief.... Negroes are coming in in great numbers to the portion of our army at Lake Providence. Not less than a thousand have made their appearance, all telling fearful stories of the brutality of their masters.... The indications are that we shall not suffer from a lack of servants to do the drudgery of the camp, and the labors incident to a long siege. The Negroes display a willingness to perform all that is asked of them, though many appear desirous to have a few holidays for the enjoyment of their newly acquired freedom before again returning to toil. It is now said to be in contemplation to organize two or three regiments from the colored material at hand, and the prospect is that it will be done....

Exchanged Rebel Surgeons. Some seven or eight rebel surgeons who have been exchanged were at the Burnet House yesterday, and left that evening for Washington, on their way to Richmond, Va.

General Sigel Presented with a Sword. We announced some months ago that a movement was on foot among our German fellow citizens to raise funds for the purchase of a sword for Major-General Sigel.[2] A committee was appointed, and contributions were received from all parts of the country. It is of the best quality of steel, the blade being decorated with representations of the trophies of war; figures of the Goddess of Liberty and the eagle, and the motto "E Pluribus Unum." The hilt is formed of a figure representing St. George killing the dragon. The belt is heavy black velvet, richly embroidered in gold. The sword was presented to Gen. Sigel last Thursday, at Washington....

A man named Brown was arrested yesterday on the charge of stealing $25 in gold from a colored woman. He will be arraigned before Judge Saffin this morning.

Blockade Runners. New York, March 1: An arrival from Bermuda, on the 19th reports the arrival of the British steamer *Corumbia* from Charleston, with a cargo of cotton. She would discharge and load arms for a Southern port. The steamer *Miriam*, mate to the prize *Princess Royal*, was loaded with arms and would sail for Charleston in a week.

March 3, 1863 (Tuesday)

Advertisements

NATIONAL THEATER. Eighth night of the successful engagement; of the favorite Yankee Comedian, YANKEE ROBINSON, who will appear this evening in two of his great characters. Tuesday evening, March

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[1] Another "Yankee," in the form of Yankee Locke, appeared at the National Theatre, May 1 through 6, 1863, in various roles including one essayed by Yankee Robinson earlier, *Sam Patch in Paris*. Yankee Locke was on stage at Wood's Theatre, Cincinnati, April 23-27, 1866, in other plays. From December 17 through 22, 1866, also at Wood's, Locke entertained with *Green Mountain Boy, Sam Patch in France, Yankee in Hungary, Yankee in Cuba*, and other performances. It seems likely that he was a "character" actor in the style of Yankee Robinson.

[2] Sigel, a Cincinnatian, known as the "Hero of Pea Ridge" from the battle of the same name, is memorialized on several varieties of Civil War tokens.

2 [*sic*], 1863, will be presented THE GREEN MOUNTAIN BOY. Jedediah Homelred: Yankee Robinson. To conclude with (by particular request) the favorite drama of THE DAYS OF '76, Darius Dutton: Yankee Robinson.

Tom Thumb vs. Hoop Skirts. The excitement in New York on the occasion of the marriage of Gen. Tom Thumb was nothing in comparison to the daily excitement to be seen at our establishment, occasioned by the rush of ladies to purchase the well-known Queen City Hoop Skirt, which for cheapness, elegance of it, and fashionable shape, cannot be surpassed. T. Whitmore Co., S.W. corner Fourth and Central Avenue.

M.H.A. Atkin, commission merchant in flour, grain &c., No. 454 West Second Street, Cincinnati.

News of the Day

British Aristocracy on American Affairs—A Plurality of Republics. Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton in a recent "Caxtonia" paper, vindicates his famous speech in favor of the disruption of the United States and the establishment of several republics in this manner. I consider it a puerile meddling with all the issues at stake in one of the mightiest revolutions this earth has known, to consider how the process of disintegration can terminate with the separate empire of two divisions. As each state grows popular enough, and strong enough, and rich enough, as to have interests distinct from other states with which for a time it is amalgamated, such state will split itself asunder, and America will have at least as many sovereign states as Europe....

In Eastern Asia, Christians are now as sadly persecuted as they ever were in Europe. A Roman paper says that during the past year 16,000 Christians have been put to death and 20,000 reduced to slavery in the Anamite Empire.

War in Central America. New York, March 2. Advices from Guatemala say that that state has declared war against Salvador. President Carrera has marched with from 2,000 to 6,000 men.

A Murfreesboro letter says General Rosecrans has issued an order prohibiting the *Cincinnati Enquirer* and *Chicago Times* from circulating in the Army of the Cumberland.

News from Washington. Yesterday Mr. Chandler reported back from the Committee on Commerce the bill providing for the collection of abandoned property and the purchase of staples in insurrectionary districts in the United States. The Secretary of the Treasury, under this bill, has the authority to appoint agents to collect abandoned property and to buy cotton, rice, sugar, and tobacco in "Secessia."[1] All such property is to be held and sold for the benefit of the United States, and all property coming from disloyal into loyal sections, otherwise than through these agents, is to be confiscated.

Thirty-Seventh Congress. Mr. Wilson of Mass. said he was astonished that the Senator from Kentucky persisted in making idle charges against Gen. Butler. He read from a letter from Gen. Butler thanking him (Wilson) for defending him from the imputations made against him in the Senate; among others, that he had taken the plate and furniture of Alex. Rothers for his own use....[2]

March 4, 1863 (Wednesday)

Advertisements

NATIONAL THEATER. Last night but three of the celebrated comedian, YANKEE ROBINSON, who will appear in two of his most favorite characters. Wednesday evening, March 4, will be acted the comedy of the GREEN MOUNTAIN BOY, to conclude with the most laughable play of FOREST ROSE.

Cheap Goods!! At Deland's, 74 & 76 West Fourth Street. Black silks! Choice colored silks!!...

Lyon's Kathairon. This delightful article for preserving and beautifying human hair is again put up by the original proprietor, and is now made with the same care, skill, and attention which first created its immense and unprecedented sales of over one million bottles annually! It is still sold at 25c.... D.S. Barnes & Co., New York.

News of the Day

Letter from Murfreesboro: Sutler's Tricks. Whether Jews or Gentiles, following an army with goods and chattels, are a blessing or a curse to our soldiers, has, for some time, been an unsolved problem. I think, ere long, the majority of reflecting men will decide against such an appendage.

Letter from the Army of the Potomac: McClellandism. The Army of the Potomac was McClellandized to an alarming degree, but it is made up of sober, thinking volunteers whom reflection has convinced of the error of clinging to a useless idol in preference to fighting for the principles of self-government. That old and foolish affection is almost forgotten, and few regretted the departure of the noble, magnanimous, and self-sacrificing Burnside, less than the absence of his always semi-successful predecessor.

From Before Vicksburg: The glorious career of the *Queen of the West* has been brought to an end. The boat which bore a prominent part in the naval battle before Memphis caused the destruction of four gunboats on the Yazoo, ran the blockade at Vicksburg, and destroyed three rebel transports, has at last fallen into rebel hands. It was her fate not to be captured in a fair stand-up fight with one of her own kind, but to be stranded within point-blank range of a rebel battery, and thus be compelled to transfer her allegiance....

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[1] These four agricultural products are precisely the same ones mentioned on the Wealth of the South tokens from a die cut by Benjamin True, 1860, and issued by John Stanton.

[2] Gen. Benjamin Butler, who took charge of the Union occupation of New Orleans in 1862, was called "Spoons" Butler by some residents, in view of his commandeering silverware and other items of value. These numerous allegations Butler strongly denied, and later wrote a book telling of his great honesty, service to the Union, etc., etc.

Financial and Commercial. Tuesday, p.m. Congress has passed and the President signed the National Bank bill, and in a like manner the finance bill has become law.... It is known that Mr. Chase is opposed to the further expansion of the currency, and it is believed that in exercising the discretion authorized by Congress, he will be governed by his oft-repeated views upon this point. If so, instead of issuing Legal Tender or Interest Bearing Notes he will put the six percent bonds upon the market. This course, if adopted, would at once depress the market for gold, for it is upon the further expansion of the currency that the coin speculators base their hope of profit....

March 5, 1863 (Thursday)

Advertisements

NATIONAL THEATER. Last night but two of YANKEE ROBINSON. First night of Wm. Fuller, the champion skater. Thursday evening, March 5, will be performed, for the first time, the drama of THE BLACK SEAL. Jeremiah Hopkins: Yankee Robinson. After which the champion skater, Wm. Fuller, will perform. To conclude with LIMERICK BOY. Tomorrow evening Farewell Benefit of Yankee Robinson.

A New National Song dedicated to Gov. Morton, entitled *Flag of Our Union.* Price 35 cents, post free. A.C. Peters & Bro., 94 West Fourth Street, opposite Post Office.

Last Three Days of the Polyorama at Smith & Ditson's Hall.

Pike's Opera House. Last night of the talented actress, Miss MARY AGNES CAMERON. Thursday evening, March 5, will be presented the comedy of the LOVE CHASE. Constance: Miss Cameron.

Magical Sewing Machines. A fresh supply of Double Threaded $25 Family Sewing Machines just received at No. 126 Fourth Street, Commercial Building, upstairs. Agents wanted.

News of the Day

Prosperity of Ohio in War. It is a very common idea that war is necessarily injurious to the interests of any state engaged in war, but this is not in all cases true. In Motley's *History of the United Netherlands,* it will be seen that Holland was prosperous, as to commerce and industry, in the midst of the great war waged by Philip of Spain upon the liberty and territories of the Netherlands.... This state [Ohio] has borne her part to the fullest extent. But the war is beyond her borders.... While here wealth increases, her debts diminish, and her credit is unimpaired. The Commissioner of Statistics has given some facts in his annual report to the Legislature, which indicate in what manner the war has really affected Ohio. The number of new structures erected in Ohio during 1862 was equal to the average of the last five years. The aggregate of mortgage debt in Ohio was five millions less than the average of previous years—proving what common observation on business shows, that private debts are rapidly diminishing. The cause is obvious. The very thing which increases the public debt—the issue of paper money—enables individuals to pay their debts more readily....

Gold and the Currency. (The government bankers argue that the present [very high] price of gold is not the just measure of the inflation of the currency. It represents rather the panic shrewd speculators have been able to inspire. The actual inflation only warrants a premium of 30 or 40 percent; the remainder of the 72 percent, at which it stands today, could be knocked off in 48 hours, if the solid bankers of New York, who have had nothing to do with Wall Street speculations, would throw their gold on the market....

The Army and the Conscription Bill. Washington. A statement that the government has decided to call out six or eight hundred thousand new troops is going the rounds of the papers. It is untrue. The government has not yet come to any conclusion on that point....

City News. There were 469 cases tried at the Police Court during the month of February. • Yesterday morning all the transient boats lying at the wharf, seven in number, were notified to report for government service, at Columbus, Ky. • Four companies of the 10th O.V.C. arrived in this city, on their way to rejoin the army in the field. They, with the three companies of sharpshooters who arrived on Sunday night, left on the steamers *Jacob Strader* and *Emerald* last evening for Louisville.

March 6, 1863 (Friday)

Advertisements

NATIONAL THEATER. Farewell benefit of YANKEE ROBINSON on which occasion a carte de visite of Yankee Robinson will be presented to every lady who visits the theatre. Friday evening, March 6, will be presented the drama of TIMES THAT TRIES US. Josiah Putnam: Yankee Robinson. After which Mad. Agnes, La Petite Emma, Little Alice Lake, and Wm. Fuller, the champion skater, will appear....

For Sale. House and perpetual lease of lot. House of 10 rooms and wide hall, pleasantly situated, in a good location, and central part of the city. Price $4,100. Address E.A., Cincinnati Post Office.

Merchant Tailoring at Waldron's, 46 Fifth Street, where may be found a large assortment of cloths and cassimeres, which will be made up to order in the most approved style.

News of the Day

From Before Vicksburg. Admiral Porter is anxiously waiting for the arrival of several large new gunboats, and we do not think he will need to make any heavy movement before they are ready.... A short time ago the Admiral issued an order that any persons who were caught in the act of firing upon our unarmed transports should have a summary trial, and be executed....

News from Vicksburg. Memphis, May 3. The capture of the *Indianola* is confirmed. It occurred under circumstances that lead to the belief that she was unnecessarily surrendered. Last Friday the *Queen of the West* was discovered under the guns of Warrenton, in condition to do effective service. Sickness in the army is increasing. The canal between the Mississippi River and Lake Providence is finished. The water was not yet let in.

A Thorough Reform Needed. From the *St. Louis Republican.* Young's Point, La., February 28. To ignore longer the terrible condition of our army before Vicksburg cannot but be fatal. Unless the truth be spread before the country, ere long the brave Army of the Mississippi will be destroyed, and the world will think that they had been cruelly, shamefully murdered by our own neglect. You must know that we have much sickness—too much. The warm, moist, murky atmosphere, the muddy ground, the worse quarters of steamboats, the hard fare and the swollen river are of themselves sufficient to produce numerous diseases; but these unfavorable conditions are rendered still worse by the wretched inefficiency of the surgeons, the actual cruelty of their assistants, and in a great measure by the want of suitable food for the men....

News from Evansville. March 5. The *Prairie Rose, Sallie List,* and *St. Cloud,* from Memphis to Cincinnati; *Poland,* from Nashville to Cincinnati, passed today. The river is rising fast. It has risen two feet during the last 24 hours. The weather is cloudy. It is trying to snow. There are large quantities of freight on our levee and in warehouse, chiefly tobacco.

The Battle of Bear River. The *Deseret News* [Salt Lake City] of the 10th ult., gives full particulars of the Battle of Bear River that took place on the 20th of January, between a little over 300 volunteers under Col. Connor, and a largely superior force of Indians. These Indians are the most desperate on the northern emigrant route, having for the past 15 years been the terror of emigrants, and on two occasions defeated regular troops....

March 7, 1863 (Saturday)

Advertisements

NATIONAL THEATER. Last night of YANKEE ROBINSON. Saturday evening, March 7, will be presented for the second time, TIMES THAT TRIES US. After which the Champion Skater, Mr. Wm. Fuller will perform. To conclude with the laughable farce of THE VERMONT WOOL DEALER....[1]

Carpets at wholesale—for cash. We have in store a large and complete assortment of English and American carpeting, floor oil cloths, rugs, mats, &c.... John Shillito & Co., 100, 103, and 105 West Fourth Street.[2]

Steamboat. For Memphis, the new and elegant steamer, *Alice Dean,* J.H. Pepper, master....

To Artists, Engravers and Others. Designs for National Currency Notes are hereby invited of the denominations of $5, $10, $20, $50, $100, $500, and $1,000, to be issued under the Act of Congress authorizing a National Currency, approved February 25, 1863. The designs must be National in their character; and none will be considered that have been used, in whole or in part, upon any currency, bond, certificate, or other representative of value, and completed bills must all be of the uniform size of seven inches by three inches. Designs must be for both the obverse and reverse of the note.... Proposals will also be received for furnishing dies in accordance with the designs.... Proposals and designs must be enclosed in sealed envelopes and directed to the Secretary of the Treasury, and plainly indorsed, "Designs and Proposals for National Currency," and will be opened on the 28th day of March, 1863, at 12 o'clock M. S.P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury.

News of the Day

War and Sugar Production. It has always been the custom of the noble and philanthropic Anglo Saxon race to discuss the question of African emancipation on the cotton and sugar gauge. The production of these commodities for white consumption and white commerce, being magnanimously assumed to be the destiny ordained by kind white Providence for the blacks, their inalienable right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are of course subject to the effect emancipation would have on the production of cotton and sugar. If it were shown that the Negro, in a condition of freedom, would produce *more* for export than in a condition of slavery, it was held conclusive that Providence intended him to be free....

Transaction. The *Rochester Union* says a man doing business at Suspension Bridge sent to a banker in that city a letter containing a five-cent shinplaster, issued by a citizen, with the request that he would redeem it, as it was a check drawn upon him. No postage stamp was sent to pay return postage, so the banker put two one-cent postage stamps in a letter, reserving three cents for a postage stamp for the outside, and sent it back. As a financial operation for the party sending the shinplaster for redemption, it is not a profitable one. He paid three cents postage to get his five-cent shinplaster to Rochester for redemption, and the party who remitted the proceeds reserved and expended three cents for postage, which was of course deducted; so the party at Suspension Bridge has paid six cents to get five.

Financial and Commercial. Friday p.m. The gold panic has not yet culminated.... Speculators are fighting desperately, but thus far under great disadvantage.... The principal cause seem to have been the Act of Congress taxing gold transactions and prohibit-

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[1] Following the end of Yankee Robinson's engagement, the next engagement was of the Great Ballet Troupe, which engaged in ballet, pantomimes, etc.

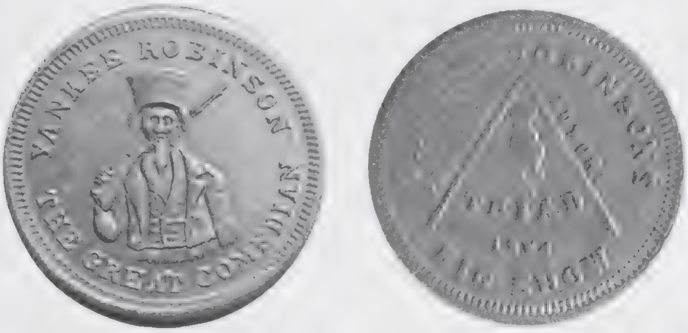
[2] This firm issued encased postage stamps in 1862.

> ing loans on coin over par. In addition to this the New York Legislature is about to pass a law prohibiting the banks, insurance companies, and savings institutions from loaning on gold at all. The *Herald* predicts that the decline will not stop until the price reaches 125.... In our [Cincinnati] market the prevailing buying rates were 45 percent premium for gold and 25 to 35 percent for silver....

The Tokens of Yankee Robinson

While in Cincinnati, Yankee Robinson may have become acquainted with John Stanton, whose shop was a prolific issuer of tokens, including the Prairie Flower pieces discussed under Adventure No. 2. Or, perhaps the connection with Stanton was made in some other way. Whatever the procedure, Robinson ordered tens of thousands or more pieces, if the general availability of certain issues today is any indication.

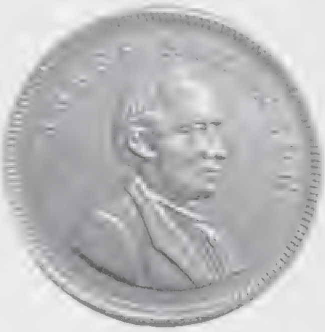
These were produced by the use of several different obverse and reverse dies as described below.



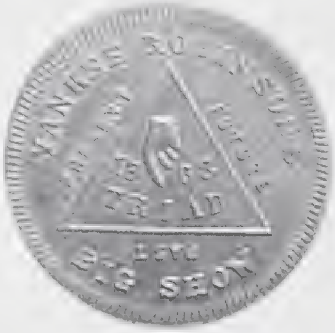
The most popular Civil War token issued by Yankee Robinson in 1863, with his "Triad" mentioned on the reverse. "The Great Comedian" Yankee Robinson in frontiersman's open jacket, with vest, wearing a top hat and with a rifle over his shoulder, his signature "Old Hat and Gun" widely used in advertising. These tokens seem to have been struck by the tens of thousands, and examples are fairly plentiful today. Perhaps they were used as "throws" and tossed to the audience from the stage, a practice of some entertainers of the era, or perhaps there was another purpose, as yet undiscovered.

I call these dies Robinson Stock Die O-1" and "Robinson Stock Die R-1." (2x enlargements for this and following Yankee Robinson token illustrations).

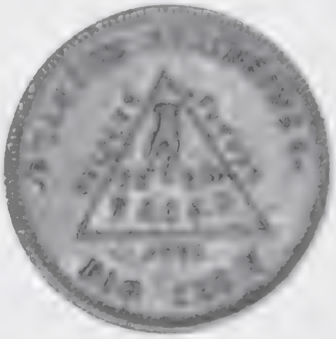
"Robinson Stock Die O-1A" created by adding the date 18/69 to Robinson Stock Die O-1. Tokens from this modified die are fairly scarce today. The example illustrated is in white metal and is slightly off center.



"Robinson Stock Die 2" is entirely different and depicts Yankee Robinson in a more sedate pose, the businessman rather than the rifle-wielding entertainer—a more formal portrait in the style that P.T. Barnum used during the era (although Barnum issued no Civil War tokens).



This second reverse die style of 1863, "Robinson Stock Die R-2," is a variation of the preceding and has similar inscriptions (but with slightly different placement in relation to each other), plus the added date 1863. *This die was later altered by overpunching the last numeral in the date to read 9, as 1869,* to create "Robinson Stock Die R-2A." It seems that in this form the die was used sparingly, for such tokens are elusive today.



A variation on the preceding theme, "Robinson Stock Die R-3" has the date 1869 from a different die, not altered from 1863, and with the finger pointing toward the left (George Fuld Collection).

A summary of the preceding dies:

Yankee Robinson Dies

Robinson Stock Die O-1: YANKEE ROBINSON / THE GREAT COMEDIAN. Portrait at center, facing forward, holding rifle.

Robinson Stock Die O-1A: Modification of Obverse 1 by adding the date 18/69.

Robinson Stock Die O-2: YANKEE ROBINSON with portrait facing to the viewer's right.

Robinson Stock Die R-1: TRIAD, etc. No date on die.

Robinson Stock Die R-2: TRIAD, etc. Date 18/63 divided by finger; finger points slightly to the right.

Robinson Stock Die R-2A: Modification of Reverse 2 by changing the 3 to a 9, now reading 18/69.

Robinson Stock Die R-3: TRIAD, etc. Date 18/69 divided by finger; finger points slightly to the left.

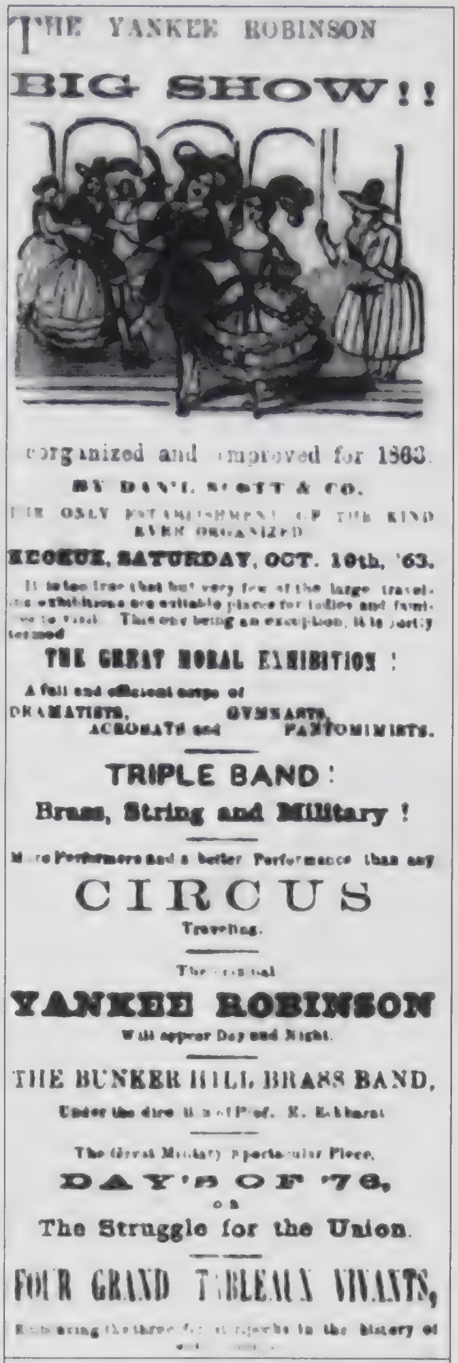
As descriptions of die combinations (including with dies not related to Yankee Robinson) may be beyond the interest of all but the most dedicated Civil War token enthusiasts, I refer readers to the standard text on the subject, George and Melvin Fuld, *U.S. Civil War Store Cards*, where such pieces are listed under *Ohio*.

The Continuing Chronicle of Yankee Robinson

On Tour in 1863

After his winter stage appearances in 1862-3, Yankee Robinson, with newly painted backdrops, a team of 40 horses, and other equipment, headed west from New York state for his spring and summer tour, starting in Syracuse, not far from his putative "home" in DeRuyter. Despite wartime conditions and generally unfavorable business for traveling shows and circuses, he seems to have had a very successful season, which ended in Peoria, Illinois.

The show this year was known as the "Triad," emphasizing events from the past, present, and future—this being per the inscription on his Civil War tokens of this year.



THE YANKEE ROBINSON

BIG SHOW!!

Reorganized and improved for 1863.

BY DAN'L SCOTT & CO.

THE ONLY ESTABLISHMENT OF THE KIND EVER ORGANIZED

KEOKUK, SATURDAY, OCT. 10th, '63.

It is too true that but very few of the large traveling exhibitions are suitable places for ladies and families to visit. This one being an exception, it is justly termed

THE GREAT MORAL EXHIBITION!

A full and efficient corps of DRAMATISTS, GYMNASTS, ACROBATS and PANTOMIMISTS.

TRIPLE BAND:

Brass, String and Military!

More Performers and a better Performance than any

CIRCUS

Traveling.

The original

YANKEE ROBINSON

Will appear Day and Night.

THE BUNKER HILL BRASS BAND,

Under the direction of Prof. R. [illegible]

The Great Military Spectacular Piece,

DAY'S OF '76,

OR

The Struggle for the Union.

FOUR GRAND TABLEAUX VIVANTS,

Embracing the three [illegible] epochs in the history of [illegible]

An 1863 advertisement for the Yankee Robinson "Big Show."

Robinson's "tableaux" consisted of "Washington's Realms of Bliss,"[1] "Outbreak of the Rebellion," "Battlefield of Antietam,"[2] and "The Traitor's Dream."[3] The troupe, which included "dramatists, gymnasts, acrobats, and pantomimists," and various sets of scenery, seems to have been equally adapted for shows in theatres as well as under canvas.

Following the "Triad"

The *New York Clipper* issues of 1863 include certain information as to Robinson's new Triad show:

May 16, 1863

Yankee Robinson will give his first "Triad" exhibition at Syracuse on the 9th.

June 6, 1863

Yankee Robinson's wife is lying dangerously ill.

June 20, 1863

Yankee Robinson's Triad was in Dunkirk, New York on the 13th.

June 27, 1863

Yankee Robinson writes us that his wife is fast recovering from her late severe illness. Yankee says that business is first rate with a single "Triad."

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[1] The life and legacy of George Washington was very much in the popular mind, and within the past decade Edward Everett had given over 200 speeches to raise money to help preserve Mount Vernon, the Philadelphia Mint had opened (February 22, 1860) the Washington Cabinet of coins and medals, and dozens of books—some scholarly and others popular—had been written about the first president. It is evident from the topics of Robinson's exhibits that he was keenly aware of public preferences.

[2] The Battle of Antietam, fought near Sharpsburg, Maryland, on September 17, 1862, was the bloodiest one-day battle of the Civil War.

[3] In October 1863, planned stops in Illinois included Aledo on the 5th; Keithburg on the 6th; and Oquawka on the 7th, per notes by the late Richard E. Conover; Circus World Museum archives.

He has a fine set of scenery, including a handsome drop curtain, painted by Hielge, and a present from P.T. Barnum. He gives dramatic performances in conjunction with gymnastic and various other kinds of entertainments. On the 16th he was in Trumansburg, New York, steering for the far West."

July 4, 1863

Yankee Robinson's "Triad" will be at Toledo on the 4th.

July 18, 1863

Yankee Robinson's "Triad" was at Adrian, Michigan on the 6th and Hudson on the 7th. "Yankee" advertises a full and efficient corps of dramatists, gymnasts, acrobats, and pantomimists; also six lady performers who appear in the Great Military Spectacle of "The Struggle for the Union," with four tableaux, as follows: Tableaux 1st. Washington and Realms of Bliss; 2. Outbreak of the Rebellion; 3. Battle Field of Antietam; 4. The Traitor's Doom.

July 25, 1863

Yankee Robinson's "Triad" performed at Mishawaka, Indiana, the 15th, South Bend, the 16th, and New Castle 17th. Daniel Scott has announced on the bills as proprietor, with "Yankee" as lessee and manager.

August 15, 1863

Yankee Robinson's "Triad" was in Prairie City, Illinois, on the 7th.

September 5, 1863:

Yankee Robinson's "Triad" was at Carbondale, Illinois, 26th and DuQuoin, 27th

The Robinson Brothers Circus [unrelated to Yankee Robinson] is doing a very good business in Indiana. On the 25th and 26th it was at Evansville, and from thence the route was up through Southern Illinois, onto Olney, thence to Saint Louis.

Yankee Robinson and the Mabie Show have both been in close proximity to the Robinson Show.

September 26, 1863

Yankee Robinson's "Triad" exhibited at Mt. Pulaski, Illinois, on the 12th.

October 10, 1863

Yankee Robinson's "Triad" was at Metamora, Illinois, the 19th, and Peoria 21st of September.

October 24, 1863

Yankee Robinson's "Triad" did a good days work at Keokuk, Iowa, on the 10th.[1]

November 7, 1863

Yankee Robinson's '"Triad" closed the season at Peoria, Illinois, on the 23rd

November 14, 1863

Yankee Robinson, having closed up the season of the "Triad," is now making preparations for a speedy departure to Havana, where he expects to spend the winter, for the benefit of his wife's health, which of late has become very much impaired.

Yankee Robinson's Big Show (1864)

Following several years of stage performances and limited exhibition, Yankee Robinson, utilizing the extensive profits he had made, went back into the operation of a grand touring circus, the first since his show had been wrecked in the South in 1859. Dan Scott, who had backed him since 1861, was a silent partner in the enterprise.

The *New York Clipper* printed this on January 23, 1864, at which time the trouper was basking in the success of recent stage appearances (perhaps distributing tokens?):

> Yankee Robinson, the famous Yankee comedian, although not extensively known in New York, has an excellent reputation in other sections of the Union, as the following notices will abundantly show:
>
> "Fare thee well and if forever: Yankee Robinson's present engagement in this city [Peoria] closed last evening with a capital house. We saw several moist eyes during the varied performances, but whether they were shedding tears at the fun he was creating, weeping at the thought that they might 'never see him no more, nor nothing,' we could not compose ourselves sufficiently to inquire. We were informed that Dr. Rouse was offered $5 for the privilege of sweeping the house after the entertainment, the sweeper to have all the lost buttons he could find." *Peoria Transcript.*
>
> "National Theatre: The indefatigable Robinson, yclept the 'Yankee,' after a week's trial at this establishment, has been tried and found wanting and nothing to please the popular taste. His Yankeeship will continue another week, during which he will appear in a series of genuine Down East characters. Tomorrow night the new piece of 'New England in 1800." *Cincinnati Commercial*
>
> "Yankee Robinson made a great hit at the theater last night, and although a stranger here, has already got on such terms of the public that his success is beyond doubt. He is perhaps the best representative of Yankee character now in America, and plays with a zest and energy that are really refreshing. Our readers would do well to stop in an see him. It is only by seeing him in one of his pieces that you can appreciate his sterling merit as an actor." *Pittsburg Gazette*
>
> "Yankee Robinson closes his engagement tonight, and takes a benefit. His stay here as been all too short,

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[1] Poster in the Circus World Museum archives (cited in Conover's notes).

> and all who desired it have not had an opportunity of witnessing his amusing performances; for Manager Grover has been compelled to turn away many nightly who could neither secure seats nor standing room. His closing performance will consist of 'Days of '76,' and a new play entitled 'Battle of Antietam,' both of which are exceedingly entertaining, particular those parts personated by Robinson himself. Of course, it would be necessary to go early to secure a seat." *Washington D.C. Star*
>
> "Yankee Robinson, at whose merit there is no need to point, the public voice in America and Europe having for years stamped him as the only performer fitted to wear the mantle of the immortal Dan Marble. Yankee Robinson's Grand Circus and theater have been known in every town and village for years past. Every American has feelings of pride in the wonderful success of the great American artist. His name is as familiar to their mouths as household words." *New York Herald*

The same issue of the *Clipper* printed this advertisement by Robinson, indicating he was at liberty and seeking opportunities. In view of the fact that today his engravings, show bills, etc., are all but non-existent in collections and archives, one can only marvel at the "paper" he once produced:

> Yankee" Robinson, comedian [Fayette Lodawick Robinson], the only true delineator of the genuine "Yankee" as he really exists in rural life, is now filling engagements with success unparalleled in this line of characters, possessing all the Yankee dramas extant, including the entire manuscript libraries of the late Dan Marble, Yankee Hill, and Josh Silsbee, together with several of his own, among which is the best modern drama on the present "times that tries," called the "Unionist's daughter," is played by him over 200 nights. This beautiful three-act drama contains the best "Yankee" character on the stage; is replete with local hits, natural and new grotesque situations, etc., etc.
>
> Having a portion of this time unoccupied, he is prepared to negotiate with first class managers. His extensive collection of engraving, lithographs, etc. (from small cuts to nine sheets, five colors, drawings all from actual representation) enables him to out-bill any comedian in the world. Mr. R. is also a manager of the world renown "Yankee Robinson's Great Show.

His plans and preparations can be followed via these mentions in the *New York Clipper* in following months:

> **March 5, 1864**
>
> Yankee Robinson starts out this season with the best show that he has ever taken on the road. He is now in want of a band, and parties of the blowing persuasion who have music in their soles and want to make the thing 'all circus' and travel with the Yankee, will find his advertisement in another column."
>
> [Advertisement] Band wanted—the easiest show to play for in existence. Short routes, no night travel. Address YANKEE ROBINSON, 48 Bleecker Street, or c/o Clarry & Reilley, 12 and 14 Spruce Street, New York.[1]
>
> **March 12, 1864**
>
> Yankee Robinson advertises for a four-horse driver, one who has traveled and knows his business; also an assistant agent, one who can handle the brush and do a little ornamenting. Parties competent will find his advertisements in another column."
>
> [Advertisement] WANTED, an assistant advertising agent that can paint ornamental bills, and will help put them up—a separate team will be devoted to that branch. Yankee Robinson, 48 Bleecker Street.
>
> [Advertisement] WANTED, superior four-horse driver, to take charge of my private chariot and harness. Must have practical knowledge. Reference required. Address c/o Clarry & Reilley, 12 and 14 Spruce Street, New York, Yankee Robinson.
>
> **March 19, 1864**
>
> A sideshow and candy stamp privileges are advertised for disposal by Yankee Robinson in this issue. Those waiting for something to turn up should certainly make a note of it."
>
> [Advertisement] ONE SIDE-SHOW, and all candy stand privileges to rent. Teams, wagon, harness, etc., furnished if desired to a first-class party. None others need apply. Clarry & Reilley, 12 and 14 Spruce Street, NY. Yankee Robinson.
>
> **March 26, 1864**
>
> Yankee Robinson notifies his company through our columns this week that he expects to meet them at Peoria, Illinois, on the 26th of April.
>
> [Advertisement] SCENIC ARTIST WANTED—To travel with the Yankee Robinson Big Show. Must be in Peoria, IL, the first of April. Call at 12 Spruce Street, 3rd Floor, or Lovejoy's Hotel. Yankee Robinson. The ladies and gentlemen engaged to travel with Yankee Robinson's Big Show will please be in Peoria, IL, Tuesday, April 26th for a rehearsal.
>
> **April 9, 1864**
>
> Yankee Robinson notifies his company, through this week's *Clipper*, to be at Peoria, IL, on the 26th for rehearsal. The Yankee is there now, busily engaged preparing for the season.

An advertisement run in the *Kenosha* (Wisconsin) *Telegraph*, June 2, 1864, provides a contemporary view of the circus as it began the season, replete with much excitement and high expectations:

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[1] Clarry & Reilley was an outfit supplier and booking agency.

Grand Opening!
of the
20th Annual Campaign
of
YANKEE ROBINSON'S
BIG SHOW

At Kenosha, Wednesday, June 8th. This unique establishment has, at great cost, enlarged and greatly improved, for 1864, a Complete New Outfit. Observe the leading features:

Poonah Obgja's Trained Animals
Monster Pythons from Barnum's Museum

New Feature in the Ring and on the Stage. Battle of Chattanooga! or the Storming of Lookout Mountain, in which a correct personation of Gen. Grant, a stud of horses and all the ladies and gentlemen will appear.

Herr Thorwaldsen, the Danish Giant, out-pull any farmer's team!

Lady Josephine Blondin, Wire Etroit and Glass Pyramids!

Signor Rinaldini, Great Leaper from the extreme Dome of the Large Pavilion!

Maggie Nichols, Chord Metallic Elastique.

Dan Bushnell, the unrivaled Gymnast and Juggler.

Lotty Howland, the pleasing sobriquet, "Yankee Gal," and danseuse.

Miss Emma Leoline, the Splendid Actress and Danseuse.

Miss Annie Ford, the charming Actress and Balladist.

Mrs. D. Shelby, the unrivaled Danseuse.

Harry Evetitt, the great Comic Vocalist from Barnum's Museum.

Mr. C. McMilln, the Balladist, Irish Comedian, and Ethiopian Performer.

W.H. Otis, Comedian, Wench Dancer.

Dan Shelby, the great "Stump Speaker," (contraband) comedian.

Geo. Marcellus, Tragedian.

Chas. Mayett, the unrivaled Jig Dancer, Ethiopian delineator, &c.

A series of magnificent
TABULEAU VIVANTS.

Unlike any thing ever done in other tent exhibitions. New life-like scenery. Splendid flag on every pole.[1]

Beautiful Lady Balladistes, Comedians & Danseuses, Comic Vocalists, Tragedians, Comedians, Ethiopian Comedians.

THE GREAT YANKEE ROBINSON

The Celebrated Broadway Band at 11 o'clock A.M. will lead the Grand Procession of all the carriages, vans, cages, baggage wagons, and Yankee Robinson's Gorgeous and costly Private Chariot!

Poonah Obgja will appear conspicuously in the procession with his Pet Bear, a feat never attempted by any other man.

Performance at 1:30 and 7:30, rain or shine.

Notwithstanding the great rise in salaries, hotel bills, &c., &c., the price has as yet not been raised. Admission 50 cts., Children under 10 years, 25 cts.

Seats for All
J.M. Chandler, Agent. H. Saulsbury, Advertiser.

Emphasis this year seems to have been on human performers, ranging from stage actors to acrobats. No mention is made of the Atheneum of pre-Civil War days. Although Poonah Obgja, "the great lion tamer," had trained animals in the show, the featured beast seems to have been a "pet bear."[2]

At about the same time James Robinson and his son Clarence advertised their troupe, Robinson & Howe's Great Hippo Theatrum, to appear in Cincinnati on June 13th. An notice published in the *Cincinnati Gazette*, June 7, 1864, did not mention the word "Yankee," but in 1867 James used "Yankee Robinson" name, as will be related.

Our Yankee Robinson's Big Show seemed to have registered great success along its route. However, the featured attractions and performers seem to have undergone a transition, for near season's end, in a bill for an appearance at DeWitt, Iowa, Wednesday, October 26, the line-up had few of the headliners in place just a few months earlier:

The Great World Renowned Showman
YANKEE ROBINSON
Is coming with an entirely new and monstrous
BIG SHOW!

The only establishment of its kind in the world. After an absence of several years, the self-same OLD ORIGINAL "YANKEE" ROBINSON (let reports say what they may) will make his appearance with that

SAME OLD HAT AND GUN,

together with any quantity of new and cute things to please everybody, as his name has long been identified with "Big Shows," "Good Shows," &c., &c., it has compelled him to INVEST A COMPLETE FORTUNE to organize an establishment commensurate with public anticipation, and is coming with a grand combination of new and pleasing novelties heretofore overlooked by all caterers.

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[1] An engraving seems to show a representative tableau—a pioneer family under attack by Indians, who are being repelled.

[2] In advertising run the same year (for an appearance in Lynn, Massachusetts, on July 8) by Van Amburgh & Co.'s Mammoth Menagerie, Great Moral Exhibition, and Egyptian Caravan, one attraction was described as "Poonah or Hindoostan Bear, only one in America."

HIS NEW BIG SHOW as near as can be rendered probable, is not unlike some of the great places of amusement in the eastern cities. Everything that money can purchase or industry invent, has been used with lavish hand to surpass any traveling show ever organized.

Over Thirty Performers, Ladies, Gentlemen, and Children, selected with great care from the Eastern Circuses and Theatres, for the express purpose of supporting

THE GREAT YANKEE ROBINSON

In his immense dramatic productions, as played by him in nearly all the first class theatres. To give due effect, Yankee Robison at enormous expense has constructed a Mammoth Elevated Portable Stage and a large quantity (six horse loads) of Magnificent and Life-Like Scenery and all the appurtenances to erect a regular and convenient Dramatic Temple in a short space of time. With the aid of these facilities he is enabled to present a series of entertainments never before attempted by any other Manager, for be it known Yankee Robinson is the only man who has successfully "Done the Drama up in a Rag." Something new and funny is what this latest age wants, and here we have it....

The Wonderful Don Santiago Gibbonnoise
The Boneless Man!

Who will go through his astonishing performances of dislocating his joints and compressing himself into the smallest compass of any living man. In addition to his numerous acts, he will place himself in a box 15 by 18 inches and allow the lid to be closed.

Another set of splendid scenery and machinery has been constructed to represent Yankee Robinson's new and intensely interesting and thrilling Military Drama, called the

Battle of Chattanooga,

Or the Storming of Lookout Mountain, in which over 30 men and horses will appear. The large stage, ample scenery and machinery, with the spacious tent room enables him to give as good a representation of a real battle as can be done in any establishment in the world. Remember this act is not done in a Circus Ring, but on an elaborate Elevated Stage, so that each visitor can have a fair view of the entire performance.

Another entirely new feature is a series of original and Gorgeous Tableau Vivants, the first ever done in a tent, will be produced at great expense, and in magnificent style. It is impossible hereto to describe their grandeur. Over $1,000 worth of chemicals and brilliantly executed fireworks consumed during the season for this one item alone. The entertainment will commence with a splendid Tableau of Gen Grant and Staff, mounted on a stud of richly caparisoned horses. To be followed in quick succession by a grand mélange of unsurpassed Acrobats, Gymnasts, and Olympians from all nations. Olio Extraordinaire by the most beautiful Lady Balladists and Danseuses. The renowned Comic Vocalist Mary Everitt, from Barnum's Museum. Professor Otis and his Learned Dogs. Signor [unclear] in his remarkable leap for life from the extreme dome of the Pavilion. Master Alf. Foysboye [? not clear] the "Inside-out Turner." Something entirely new, Lady Blondin, the heroine of Niagara Falls, will appear in two new and wonderful feats called the Invisible Wire and Glass Pyramid. The only performer, male or female, that does these sublime defying and skillful feats.

Willy Fay,[1] the Clown,

always a favorite with the Ladies. Poonah Obojah [*sic*], the Lion Tamer [not clear], and his Educated Animals, Ponies and Monkey Riders. Herr Thorwaldsen from Denmark,

The Man of Iron Muscle,

and of Lion Strength. This modern Sampson will lift Two Large Horses, which will be done in ring, fair and square, without the aid of machinery. Any amount of money to wager he will lift the celebrated [unclear].

YANKEE ROBINSON'S FAREWELL TOUR

previous to his departure for Europe. Ladies and Children unaccompanied will be especially cared for. Polite ushers will be in attendance. Seats for all. Three separate ticket offices will be opened, and there will be two doorkeepers, so as to avoid confusion. The Band and Orchestra will lead the Procession into each place of Exhibition, at or near 11 o'clock a.m., in their beautiful fairy-like

Swan Music Carriage

Drawn by eight matched horses. The magnificent harness is from the great establishment of [unclear].

After the Big Show, the Christy Minstrels, a Band embracing 13 ladies and gentlemen, will give a concert in the same tent. Tickets will be sold on the [unclear].

Will Exhibit at DeWitt, Wednesday, October 26th, 1864.

It seems that by the end of the season, Yankee Robinson was traveling in a tent show with a relatively small entourage, emphasizing his own entertainment ability on the stage. He was billed as appearing with the SAME OLD HAT AND GUN, but with the note that it had been *several years* since he employed this style—which seems to be the same figure as pictured on the obverse of his popular 1863-dated Civil War tokens. At the risk of adding a conjecture, it may have been that he had used this outfit on stage in the colder months, but not while on the road in the summer. It also seems that he was trying to recapture a characterization that he used years earlier and that was well known to his audiences.

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[1] Probably a misspelling; usually billed as Dilly Fay.

Yankee Robinson's Great Consolidations (1865)

In April 1865, Yankee Robinson seemed to have recovered from the diminishing of his company in late 1864, and now was glory-bound with his Great Consolidations (or Consolidation in some notices). P.A. Older was a financial partner, replacing (likely) or supplementing Daniel Scott, an arrangement that would last until 1869.[1] In 1871 Scott rejoined Robinson, but only as an employee.[2]

This announcement told of the show opening in several Iowa towns early in May:

Studio portrait of "Yankee" Robinson. (State Historical Society of Wisconsin's Circus World Museum, Baraboo, Wisconsin)

Everybody Says
YANKEE ROBINSON'S GREAT CONSOLIDATIONS
For the Gigantic Campaign of 1865,
Out-flanks all competitors.
Over $100,000 Investment

P.A. Older, Manager. Ebin Perry, Equestrian Director. G. McDonald, Leader. Geo. S. Cole, Treasurer. F.L. Couldock, Agent.

Yankee Robinson has associated himself with the Proprietors of EIGHT EXHIBITIONS, together with his, making NINE SHOWS!

Observe the Immense Congress of Exhibitions!

Yankee Robinson's Big Show!
re-organized, enlarged, and greatly improved.

The Great New York Circus!
Purchased of James Melville & Co. The largest and decidedly the most magnificent and costly Establishment in America, containing over forty Ring Horses, Ponies, Mules, &c., and six Lady Equestrians.

The Silver Mountain Equestrian Bears!
In their wonderful and pleasing sets, dressed in unique costume, male and female, *a la* "Yankee Boy," and "Yankee Gal." Mock Marriage ceremony, Dancing, Driving in harness, Acrobatic, Gymnastic, Posturing, Equilibrists, Racing, Soldier Drilling, Stump Speaking, &c., more than astonishing every beholder.

N.B. They are taken from their cages and brought into the Circus Ring, where their performance can be viewed by every visitor and with perfect security.

Tom Thumb's Lilliputian Cortege
As it appeared before all the crowned heads of Europe. The Shetland Ponies are the smallest and handsomest ever seen in this country. The tiny chariots, coaches, cabriolets, bretts, &c., are of the most gorgeous description. The harness, trappings, etc., are the identical ones made in London by express order of Queen Victoria, and presented to Tom Thumb in person. They now bear her Crest.

O'Reilley's Untamable Bisons!
from the Himalaya Mountains. The most dangerous and ferocious of their race.

Mons. Clarrie's Monkeys, Ponies, Dogs and Goats,
whose unparalleled antics caused such a furor in England, France, Spain, Cuba, and all the Eastern cities.

Showle's Highly Trained Animals
These sagacious quadrupeds are the same that created such immense enthusiasm throughout the metropolitan cities.

The Snow Brothers' Great Gladiatorium!
This unique establishment being entirely new and novel, unlike anything heretofore presented to the public.

The Double Troupe of Comic Mules!
They Out-Mule all the Mules that ever did Mule in any Show or Circus. Entirely new tricks and performances, making Nine Shows in one Grand Circus.

At 10 o'clock a.m. make room for the forty horse Band Team and the five splendid Chariots, including Yankee Robinson's private Chariot, drawn by four Ara-

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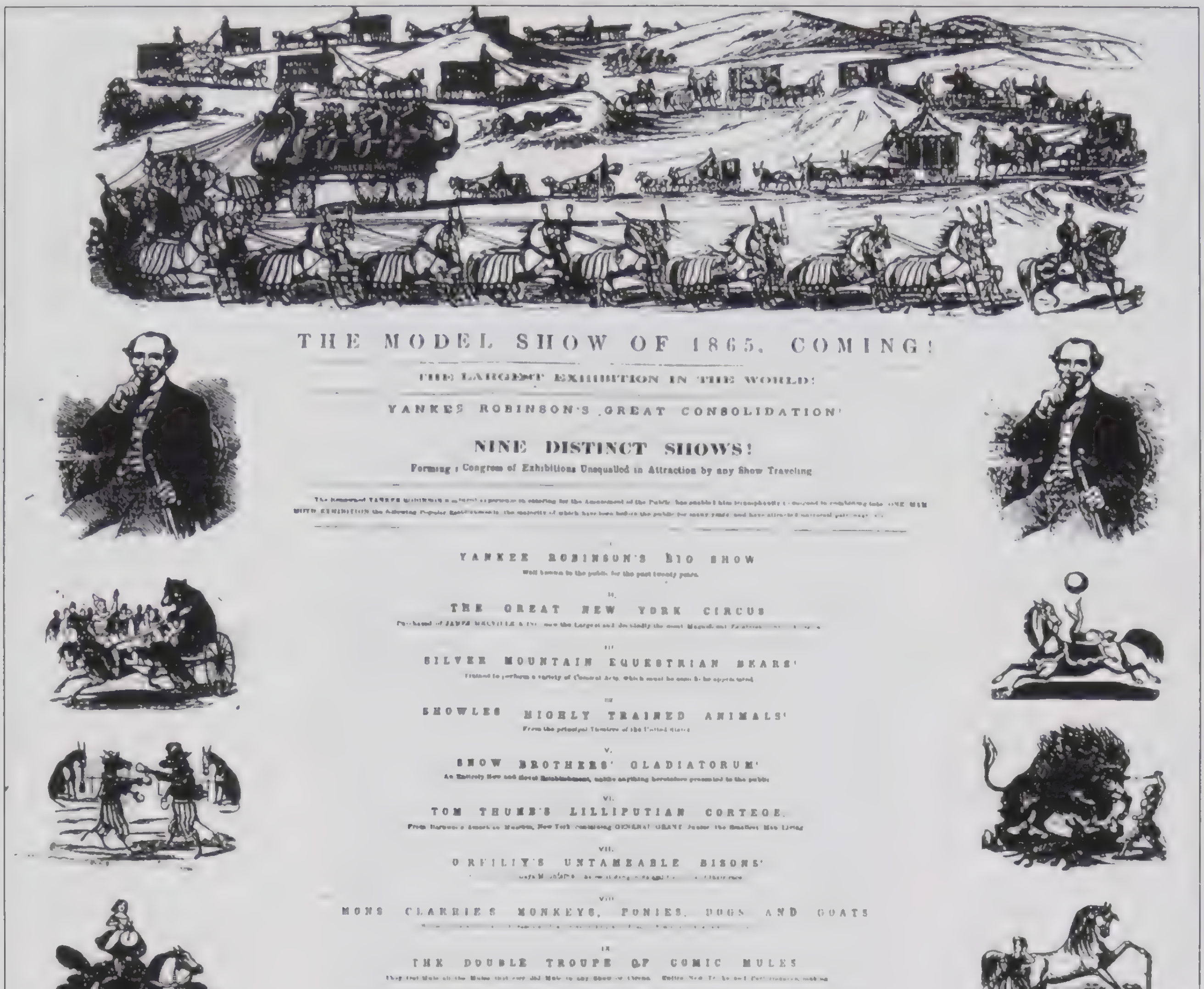
[1] *New York Clipper*, January 1, 1870.

[2] Stuart Thayer, "Sinking in St. Paul: Yankee Robinson's Great Modern Show, 1875," *Bandwagon*, September-October 1999.



THE MODEL SHOW OF 1865, COMING!

THE LARGEST EXHIBITION IN THE WORLD!

YANKEE ROBINSON'S GREAT CONSOLIDATION!

NINE DISTINCT SHOWS!

Forming a Congress of Exhibitions Unequalled in Attraction by any Show Traveling

I.

YANKEE ROBINSON'S BIG SHOW

Well known to the public for the past twenty years.

II.

THE GREAT NEW YORK CIRCUS

III.

SILVER MOUNTAIN EQUESTRIAN BEARS!

IV.

SHOWLES HIGHLY TRAINED ANIMALS!

From the principal Theatres of the United States

V.

SNOW BROTHERS' GLADIATORUM!

VI.

TOM THUMB'S LILLIPUTIAN CORTEGE.

VII.

O'REILLY'S UNTAMEABLE BISONS!

VIII.

MONS CLARKIE'S MONKEYS, PONIES, DOGS AND GOATS

IX.

THE DOUBLE TROUPE OF COMIC MULES

NINE SHOWS IN ONE GRAND CARAVAN!

The Corps of Performers

THE GREAT YANKEE HIMSELF

MODEL SHOW OF 1865. "THE ERA WE LIVE IN

GRAND HISTORICAL TABLEAU

THE LILLIPUTIAN ENTREE.

FORTY HORSE TEAM

PERFORMANCES TWICE A DAY, AT 1:30 AND 7 O'CLOCK

Rain or Shine. Seats for All. Don't Forget the Day or Date

Advertisement by Yankee Robinson in the pre-eminent trade journal of the day, the *New York Clipper*, September 9, 1865.

> bian steeds, magnificently caparisoned. The finest establishment in the United States—cost near $8,000, and the Oriental Pagoda Chariot, drawn by six beautiful ponies. Also the real Original Tom Thumb Cortège, drawn by beautifully spotted diminutive ponies, dogs and goats, containing the smallest man living, Gen. Grant, Jr., so long and favorably known at Barnum's Museum, 15 years old, weighs 18 pounds, and only 26 inches high.
>
> Performance twice a day, rain or shine, at 1:30 and 7:30 o'clock. Seats for all.
>
> **Will exhibit for one day only**
> **At DeWitt, Friday, May 5th**
>
> Also at LeClaire Thursday, May 4th, and Maquoketa, May 6th. Price of admission, 50 Cents. Children under 12, 25 Cents.

Something must have interfered with the preceding schedule, for a few weeks later the show advertised: "Will Positively Exhibit This Time, at DeWitt, on Wednesday, May 31st."

An advertisement in *The Weekly Republican*, Omaha, Nebraska, June 30, 1865, contained essentially the same text, and noted that the show would be in Omaha on Monday and Tuesday, July 3 and 4, with "three performances on the glorious fourth." It must have been a prime time, for admission was raised to 75 cents for adults and 50 cents for children under 10. It was noted that the Great Consolidations would be at Council Bluffs (Iowa), July 5 and 6, followed by Glenwood on the 7th and Plattsmouth the 8th, at which places the advanced ticket prices were continued. Engravings illustrated a military company of dressed bears holding rifles; two bears dancing; goats, monkeys, and other animals dancing while two monkeys played musical instruments; a ferocious fantastic beast (lion-like with long mane, but much larger, and with *horns*) with two prostrate animals underfoot facing a knife-wielding man[1]; and a circus parade.

Following these announced stops, visits were planned for Nebraska City for a two-day stand on July 10 and 11.

Seeking engagements for 1865, Robinson ran an impressive full-page advertisement in the *New York Clipper*, September 9, which seems to be somewhat late in the season. In addition to the earlier-cited attractions, Robinson noted that his was the "Model Show of 1865" and represented "The Era We Live In." His 40-horse team was headlined as were the five chariots, highlighted by Robinson's own and the Oriental Pagoda.

Modern-day circus historians who might lament the great rarity of surviving paper from this era can only contemplate that Robinson in 1865 proclaimed: "See Mammoth Posters, over thirty kinds." Further:

> Will visit all the principal towns in Eastern Missouri, Southern Illinois, Southern Indiana, Northern Kentucky, and all the Southwestern cities. A corps of agents, bill posters, etc., will be preceding the GREAT CONSOLIDATION about 15 days.

Years later, a story related that in April 1865 he had "purchased [certain elements of] James Melville and Jerry Mabies' Australian Circus,[2] and ran a 40-horse team and 125 head of horses, with P.A. Older as manager and Geo. S. Cole, treasurer.[3] In the company were Ed. Perry and family, Snow Brothers, and Charley Parker, clown. However, Mabies' Australian Circus was conspicuously absent from 1865 publicity.

Yankee Robinson's Great Consolidation "closed the season at Decatur, Illinois." The winter of 1865-1866 was spent in Decatur.[4]

William C. Coup, who had entered circus life in the early 1850s and had traveled with Mabies' Grand Olympian Arena and U.S. Circus, and had remained with it for more than a decade, found himself under the employ of Yankee Robinson after the Mabies show was sold in 1865, according to a ghost-written recollection published posthumously in 1901.[5] If Coup was part of the Robinson entourage in 1865, he was not deemed worthy of mention in print. According to tradition, Coup would remain with Yankee Robinson from 1865 or 1866 until 1869 in the capacity of side show manager, after which he retired in Delavan, Wisconsin, for the more settled occupation of raising livestock.[1]

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[1] The animal-monster may have been the precursor to "An African Man-Eater" billed in 1866, and the "Wallapus" (which did not have a mane) which followed soon thereafter.

[2] Melville family members with the circus included James, Frank, and George; in 1858 James Melville had been a show rider with Nixon & Kemp's Circus. Mabie's Menagerie was operated by Jerry Mabie.

[3] Recollection published in the Baraboo *Republic*, May 14, 1884.

[4] Notes by the late Richard E. Conover; Circus World Museum archives.

[5] The following is from *Sawdust and Spangles*, Herbert S. Stone and Company, by W.C. Coup, 1901, a reminiscence "dictated by W.C. Coup, at odd moments in the big show tent, the special car or the hotel where he chanced to find himself with a half-hour at his disposal." The introduction noted: "William Cameron Coup, born in Mount Pleasant, Indiana, in 1837. While he was still a boy, his father bought the local tavern in a small country village. The business of hotel keeping did not commend itself to the future showman, who left home and took the position of 'devil' in a country newspaper office. Soon, however, he became dissatisfied with the opportunities which the printing craft seemed to present, and started out to find something which better suited his unformed and perhaps romantic ideas of a profession. After a hard tramp of several miles he chanced to encounter a show, and immediately determined that this was the field to which he would devote his energies and in which he would make for himself a name and a fortune. With this show he served an apprenticeship, in a humble capacity, and gained a clear idea of the essentials of the business. In 1861 he secured the side-show privileges of the E. F. & J. Mabie Circus, then the largest show in America. He remained with this firm until 1866, when he secured

Yankee Robinson's 9 Shows Consolidated (1866)

A story published years later related this:[2]

> On May 1 [1866] "Yankee" Robinson's circus with its 40-horse band wagon came down West Main street.... The band wagon itself glittered with gold and silver and was glorious in new paint and varnish. Pete Sells sat on the driver's seat and with both hands full of lines guided the 40 champing horses. Hundreds of Decatur boys sat on the fences which lined West Main Street and would rather have been Pete Sells than the Shah of Persia.
>
> This was not a circus come to town for a day, but was Decatur's own circus leaving town for the season. It had wintered in Fairview Park, which was then the country and sometimes the state fairground.... The fairground had several good-sized buildings which were suitable for quartering the animals, housing the wagons, and later for rehearsing the performers. The Agricultural Building, which was located just west of the spring, was used for housing the menagerie.... Many people used to go out to the fairground to see the animals on Sundays and to watch the preparations for starting the summer season.
>
> Floral Hall...was used by the performers for training quarters. There was no vaudeville then in which the actors performed during the winter and kept constantly fit, and they had to go through a season of spring training to get ready for the road.
>
> All the circus wagons and other equipment were repainted during the winter, and Bradley & Taylor, who had a wagon shop on West Main Street, did the painting.... The Wild Australian Albinos which accompanied the show on that tour were a purely Macon County product. They were the Evans brothers, who were born and raised a few miles west of Decatur. They were dwarfs and were subnormal in intelligence and were not albinos. This was a lack which the adroit side-show man had no difficulty in remedying with the aid of wigs of white hair. How long they traveled with the circus cannot be positively stated, but they lived in the county for many years after this memorable occasion.
>
> Pete Sells was for many years as one of the best known characters in Decatur. He was a man of giant physique, and mounted on that band wagon he was certainly a fine figure.... [In later years] he achieved something of a reputation as a bad man and a bully....

The line-up at the start of the 1866 season was somewhat similar to that used in 1865, but with some changes. Every circus—and Robinson's was no exception—thrived on new attractions, and each year novel features were added, while former acts were discontinued. Moreover, turnover of personnel in circus troupes was ongoing, and the men and women featured in the ring and on stage one year were apt to be with another traveling company the following year.

A complimentary pass dated 1866 bears this text on the face and (punning "Moral") back:[3]

> **COMPLIMENTARY 1866**
>
> **to**
>
> **Yankee Robinson's 9 Shows Consolidated**
>
> **Presented by "Yankee" Robinson Himself**
>
> MORAL: The party accepting this Pass accepts all risk of being run over by the 40 Horse-Span Team, or of the Baby Elephant treading on his pocket book. Yankee Robinson will not be responsible for any damage through negligence or design of any of the Moral Monkies.
>
> The party is most respectfully solicited to make room for the Dromedaries and Camels, as long as they once got their backs up, making a Procession over a Mile Long (in Noah's time) and to have no business with the Untamable Bisons, and not to offer "Stocks," &c., to the Silver Mountain Equestrian Bears, as the Bulls have a Sacred feeling in Wall Street. Don't ask a ride in Tom Thumb's Cortege with all his tiny Chariots, Cabriolettes, and Phaetons, drawn by the Smallest Ponies in the world, or with the Six Dog Team as it is loaded with Snow.
>
> But Yankee Robinson's Private Chariot has room for one more. It is muchly understood that no one will be admitted unless he comes himself, and the Oftener he Comes the better it will suit the subscriber.
>
> Pass Mr. [blank to be filled in]
>
> To Yankee Robinson's Circuses and Menageries, and Return.

---

similar privileges with the Yankee Robinson Circus, with which he allied himself until 1869. In the latter year he formed a co-partnership with the celebrated Dan Costello and entered upon the first of the original ventures marking as many distinct epochs in the history of the circus in America. This departure was the organization of a show which traveled by boat and stopped at all the principal lake ports of the great inland seas. This enterprise was a decided success."

[1] Coup was soon back in the circus ring, and forged an alliance with P.T. Barnum, launching on April 10, 1871, P.T. Barnum's Grand Traveling Museum, Menagerie, Circus and Hippodrome, which started in Brooklyn, New York, and then traveled by rail to other towns and cities. Coup later went on to other alliances and engagements, and by the time of his death in Jacksonville, Florida, March 4, 1895, was respected as one of show business' greatest figures.

[2] "Robinson's Circus Left Decatur Winter Quarters Fifty-Four Years Ago," *The Decatur Review*, May 16, 1920. Recollections were provided by "Ben Howenstine and numerous other reputable citizens."

[3] Cited from unknown source by John A. Dingess, manuscript.

All throughout this era, and dating back many years earlier, the aspect of "morality" was featured in many circus bills—so as to eliminate or reduce criticism from the clergy, do-gooders, and others that circuses were sinful and degrading. Plays and skits often emphasized the unfortunate effects of drunkenness, gambling, or other dissipation.

Another series of 1866 season's passes, each with different vignettes, but the same text, bore the face inscription including this text:

> **Complimentary 1866 to**
> **YANKEE ROBINSON'S NINE SHOWS CONSOLIDATED!**
>
> Most Positively the Largest Exhibition ever organized. Over 300 Men and Horses! The 40 Horse Band Team! Baby Elephant, Bisons, Dromedaries, Monster Animal Dens, Tom Thumb's Cortege drawn by Pigmy Ponies, a Six dog Team, Yankee Robinson's Private Chariot, &c., making a Procession over a Mile Long! Presented by Yankee Robinson Himself.

At the start of the 1866 tour, the officers of the company included: Yankee Robinson, general superintendent; P.A. Older, manager; George S. Cole, treasurer; E.W. Perry, equestrian director; George Sears, lion tamer; E.H. Olds, leader of the silver band; Charles Parker, principal clown; and R.S. Dingess, general agent.

At a subsequent Illinois stop, the performance of May 14 was reported by the *Quincy Herald:*[1]

> The Great Yankee Robinson Circus has at last arrived and our big ones and our little ones will now rest content having seen the great High-Yankee-Dank. Besides many cages, chariots, wagons, etc., the procession was headed by the magnificent 40-horse band car, which it itself is a sight worth seeing.

This advertisement appeared in the spring and announced an engagement in Carthage, Missouri, to be held on May 18. The announcement begins with what seems to be an unattributed quotation:

> "Has Accomplished It At Last!"
> The same old and original "Simonpure"
>
> **YANKEE ROBINSON**
>
> Has associated himself with the Proprietors of Eight Distinct Exhibitions merged with his, making "The"
> Colossal Moral Exhibition
> For the Era we live in
>
> **9 SHOWS CONSOLIDATED**
>
> Menageries and circuses, and most Positively the Largest Show in America, Over 300 Men and Horses. The rarest collection of Ferocious Living Wild Animals ever brought to this country. The
>
> **Only Yankee Born Elephant**
> **A BABY ELEPHANT**
>
> Just weaned from its Mother. A Mammoth Dromedary, only one imported since 1835. A Herd of Sacred Cattle. Monster Dens of Performing Lions & Tigers. A Jet Black Lion allowed to be the greatest curiosity in the Animal Kingdom.
>
> A striped Wild Horse. An Untamable Bison will be introduced into the circle by strong men. The Silver Mountain Equestrian Bears in their astonishing and almost human performances. An African "Man Eater." A troupe of Trained Ponies & Monkeys. The School of Educated Dogs and Monkeys. The wonderful Performing Elephant, Elfin. Performing Camels and Kangaroos.
>
> The literal fulfillment of Scripture, viz: "The lion and the lamb shall lie down together, and a little child shall lead them."
>
> "The Last Wonder!" A Span of Bears in Harness will be driven around the Arena before a wagon.
>
> At or near 10 o'clock A.M. The Great Caravan will enter Town preceded by the 40 Horse Band Chariot. The largest team ever driven by one man, containing Prof. Olds' Silver Cornet Band, followed by the Tom Thumb Cortege, the Smallest Teams ever harnessed, and driven by the Smallest Men.
>
> The Tiny Chariots, Phaetons and Coaches are drawn by the smallest Ponies in the world. A little Miniature Buggy will be drawn by a Trained Ibex. The harnesses are the identical ones presented to Tom Thumb by Queen Victoria. The Baby Elephant and Dromedary magnificently caparisoned. A Dashing Team of Six Dogs.
>
> **Yankee Robinson's Chariot**
>
> And an immense train of Animal Dens, Cages, &c., &c., making a Procession Over a Mile Long. The entire outfit is of the most gorgeous description, surpassing anything ever attempted in Europe or America. It will repay a visit of 50 miles to witness.
>
> A Triple Company of All Bare-Back Riders. Five Lady Equestriennes, the Smallest Lady Rider ever appeared before the public. The best 4 Horse Bare-Back Rider in the known world. The Limberest Man ever existed. General Performers, Gymnasts, Acrobats, Contortionists, Leapers, Tumblers, Jugglers, &c.
>
> The Three Funniest Clowns that money will hire. Most positively the handsomest and most numerous Stud of Marked Ring Horses and Ponies. "Them Fool Mules." The Stock of Three Circuses constituting an Establishment that cannot be excelled.
>
> Just previous to opening the door in the afternoon, if the weather be propitious, M'lle Ravella, the Great Tight Rope Artist, will make a Grand Ascension on a single cord or wire from the ground to the uppermost

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[1] Cited by Tom Parkinson in "Yankee Robinson – Season 1866," *The Bandwagon*, February 1943.

> top of the Immense Pavilion, which is capable of accommodating 10,000 persons.
>
> Notwithstanding this immense outlay, the Price of Admission will not be raised, let reports be what they may. Doors open at 1:30 and 7 o'clock P.M....
>
> The Grand Cavalcade of Twelve Beautiful Horses will enter the Circle after all the guests have had ample opportunity to view the countless numbers of Living Wild Animals, from the Four Quarters of the Globe. During the performance the Great Lion Tamer will enter the Dens of Lions and Tigers in presence of the entire audience.
>
> After the Consolidated Show, the Celebrated Minstrel Band will perform in the Big Tent. A band of 13 talented members.
>
> **Will Exhibit at**
> CARTHAGE
> May 18, 1866
>
> Admission, 50 cts.; children under 10 years, 25 cts. Doors open at 1½ and 8 p.m.

A contract preserved by the Circus World Museum, dated Naperville, Illinois, June 2nd, 1866, provides for accommodations for the crew of The Yankee Robinson Great Consolidations, Circus & Menagerie, signed by D.[?] A. Hatch as agent, and notes in part:

> Board and lodging to be provided "for 75 people (more or less), the men to sleep two in a double bed at 100 cents each man, per day, or twenty-four hours, three meals and lodging, to constitute a day's lodging. Children half price. 90 horses (more or less) with good stabling. Oats and corn, hay (as much as the Overseer thinks proper to feed, but not to waste) including dry straw for bedding, at 50 cents each horse per day or twenty-four hours. Ponies half price....
>
> The means to be prepared at the time required by the Manager. The Manager will not be accountable for any bar bills, washing, or extra meals, as they are strictly prohibited.

On June 12, 1866, the show was in Chicago in tents pitched on the shore of Lake Michigan at the end of Randolph Street.[1] The reception was enthusiastic, the local papers reported. Early in July the circus was in Milwaukee, scheduled to go to Green Bay by the 9th, after which the troupe "is steering for the states of Iowa and Minnesota."

According to a later account of uncertain reliability, the Yankee Robinson touring procession, with Coup in charge of certain facilities, started from Decatur "in the spring of 1866 with about the same company of performers used in 1865, and with John O'Brien's animals. Robinson, we believe, paid O'Brien a percentage amounting to $23,000, proving a big season. He closed at Chicago, and erected Yankee Robinson's Coliseum and Zoological Garden at State and Washington streets."[2]

Early the following year, Yankee Robinson evaluated his long-time partnership with Dan Scott, which had commenced in times of difficulty earlier in the decade. Apparently, Scott was a silent backer who did little in the way of managing (not that Robinson's strong personality would have allowed this anyway), but who received a share of the profits. In Robinson's own words:[3]

> **A Reminiscence**
>
> The last season his share of the profits, including the sale of his half of the show, netted him over $74,000, as my books will now show, which was invested mostly in real estate in Rice County, Minnesota.
>
> I can say boldly that I made him this money, as it was all "Yankee Robinson," I playing my Yankee dramas twice a day, through extreme heat, cold, rain, mud; giving my services against his and a few old plugs of horses, until we were able to augment with show-earned money of '61, '62, '63, '64, then I built up a circus and menagerie and ran the "boss show" for three seasons....

The Chicago Exhibition (1867)

The Chicago set-up is puzzling as to its financial arrangements. One notice is titled: "Chicago 1867. Yankee Robinson's Zoological Gardens and Coliseum. The Champion Bare Back Rider of the World, James Robinson, and his Son Clarence" and includes their portraits.[4]

Another notice shows a two-story structure at 106-114 State Street, Chicago, impressively lettered YANKEE ROBINSON'S ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS / COLISEUM on its front. On the roof is a further two-story circular cupola with many windows. Flags are inscribed "CIRCUS" and "YANKEE ROBINSON," and does not mention James or Clarence. At the bottom is the inscription: "The largest and best constructed Circus House and extensive collection of Living Wild Animals."

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[1] Dates and quotations in this paragraph are from Tom Parkinson, "Yankee Robinson – Season 1866," *The Bandwagon*, February 1943.

[2] Story published in the Baraboo *Republic*, May 14, 1884. • "We believe" indicates that Yankee Robinson did not supply this information. It seems likely that this story, although it contained some elements of truth, was made up from clippings or scraps, for certain statements do not square with *contemporary* notices.

[3] *Saint Paul Dispatch*, July 7, 1875.

[4] Robinson was not his real name, as related by the *New York Clipper*, years earlier, December 18, 1858: "James Robinson (Mike Fitzgerald), who was known here two years ago was a boy rider of 18 years, and at that time beyond all comparison, the greatest rider that ever appeared before in the audience, went from here to England with Howes & Cushing's U.S. Circus at a salary equivalent to $400 a week, and will ride in the American Circus, in Alhambra, and London, certainly before many of the nobility and probably before the queen."

Still another notice illustrates the same building and bears the reproduced signature of Yankee Robinson in the same form as used in other advertisements in other years, seemingly lending Yankee's imprimatur to the venture. Except for this permanent show, James Robinson, who billed himself as "Yankee Robinson," is not known to have had a connection with *our* Yankee Robinson. Perhaps some sort of a licensing or other arrangement was made.

Yankee Robinson's Consolidated Shows (1868)

On Friday, May 1, 1868, Yankee Robinson's Grand Consolidated Show opened for the season in Quincy, Illinois, to the admiration of local newspaper reports.[1] On Saturday, May 2, the *Daily Republican* printed this detailed commentary (excerpts).

> ### The Circus Parade
>
> The unique show of Yankee Robinson was exhibited yesterday, for the first time this year, and we may as well say for the first time unqualifiedly, for although Yankee Robinson has visited us with his circus several times before, yet our citizens had never seen *this* show until yesterday. They had previously seen a part of it, but the whole stock company has been so much improved and augmented, the *cortege* and train of wagons so changed and magnificently arranged, and the general paraphernalia so much increased in brilliancy and show, that [the new scarcely resembled the old].
>
> As the carriages and cavalcade passed along the street yesterday, they presented a grand and glittering pageantry.... The sidewalks, balconies, fences, and wooden awnings were covered with eager spectators.... A fact apparent was that only first class artists, artificers, and workmen to design and construct his magnificent equipage had been employed.
>
> ### The Parade Cars and Wagons
>
> First in order in the long line of pageantry is the celebrated Polyhymnia, which...is a colossal musical organ resembling in its tones an enormous hand organ, whose loud and melodious strains are calculated to announce the approach of the caravan, and at the same time delight the listener. All that the skill of the painter can do to render the external appearance of the car gay in color and scenes has been done. On each end and one side are pictures done by the best artists.... It is 15 feet high, 13 feet long, and 8 feet wide. On the left side the front of the instrument is exposed to view, in a deep panel, elaborately gilt, and bordered by massive mirrors.[2]
>
> The next novelty is the great golden Dragon, with fierce looking teeth and eyes—an awful monster of the deep, such as the superstitious heathen mythologists might have fancied dragged the car of Pluto in his infernal realm, or in his fight with the abducted Proserpine. It has feet, claws, and tail like the fabled sea horse, and glitters in gold.
>
> Next is the magnificent *tableaux* car, which presents one of the most picturesque scenes we have ever beheld. This car is drawn by six splendid matched horses driven by a man representing the gold of the sea—old long-bearded Neptune—holding in his hand a trident.... At the centre of the car, beneath a canopy bordered with gold, stands Amphitrite, surrounded by neriades and guarded by the Spirit of Darkness standing behind her. From each of the four corners of the car a long arm projected, at the end of which was an ornamented seat, in which sat a maid appropriately decorated to represent each one of the four seasons. This car and the Dragon were built by Coan & Den Brocke of Chicago.
>
> Then came a glorious band wagon with a full band of musicians, filling the air with loud melody.
>
> Afterwards a camel led by an Arab servant, and carrying on his back a richly dressed Persian lady.
>
> Next we have a cavalcade of 25 knights arrayed in burnished steel mail from head to foot, their polished armor reflecting the sunlight like mirrors. Steel helmets, visors, cuirasses and gauntlets made one almost feel that he was back in old time with King William and his Normans, or viewing the vassals of the Black Prince.
>
> Afterwards we have 24 horsemen in gay marcon with white feathers on their caps.
>
> Then follow about 20 richly painted cages with wild animals, and for style of finish cannot be beaten in the world.
>
> Following these in a grotesque group, men on horseback, fantastically dressed so as to resemble, one a gigantic rooster, another a huge frog, another a monkey, one a mule, and one a bear.
>
> ### Menagerie in the Circus Tent
>
> Inside the expansive tent, which is of itself probably the largest in the country, is a menagerie containing some of the finest animals ever brought before the American gaze. We enumerate some of them. The elephant, Roscius, is one of the largest and most intelligent of his species, and weighs six tons. He is attended by Mr. Geo. Hoskins.

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[1] Subsequently reprinted in the *New York Clipper*, May 16, 1868, and here quoted from that source.

[2] The Polyhymnia wagon embellished with paintings showing Sappho, the Three Graces, and the Birth of Venus. This rig had been made in Quincy by the E.M. Miller Company, and was shown publicly for the first time. The Polyhymnia was a crowd pleaser, word spread, and later the Miller Company built ornate wagons for W.W. ("Chilly") Cole of the Cole-Orton show.

> About the noblest Roman of them all is the black maned African lion, Pomp, eight years old, who has a most royal look, well entitling him to the prerogative of king of beasts. He is the grandest specimen, and has the most kingly voice of any of the genus Leo which we have ever seen. A magnificent Asiatic female lion inhabits another cage. She is sleek, trim, and beautiful, and of a size corresponding to Pomp. Her name is Rose.
>
> Two African leopards, perfect beauties and probably the largest in the country, inhabit one cage, and two Asiatic leopards another. In another cage are three performing Rocky Mountain bears. Other animals which we remember are an Australian kangaroo, and African ostrich, the celebrated Wallapus, the Australian wombat, which is a real curiosity, the Sea Cow, a camel, monkeys, parrots, and dozens of others which in our haste we cannot remember.
>
> The keepers take pleasure in giving the spectators information and in "stirring up the animiles [*sic*]."
>
> **Circus Performers**
>
> The circus performers are not surpassed in anything in their line by anybody, and in many things are unequalled. The Melvilles are unapproachable in their feats of contortion and acrobatic evolutions. Originality also marks all the performance.
>
> P.A. Older, formerly a successful banker in Iowa, is the general business manager, and most of the design and workmanship has been done under his personal directors. J.M. Chandler is assistant manager and receiver of tickets. J.B. Turner is the treasurer, James Melville equestrian manager and director, and Maj. Post is leader of the band.
>
> The show leaves here on Sunday morning for towns in the direction of Chicago, which place they expect to reach in June.

On Sunday, May 3, the *Daily Herald* printed similar comments, calling the show "the greatest wonder of the century," and including certain information not in the *Daily Republican* account, among which were these glimpses:

> Yankee has good reason to feel proud of the outpouring of young, old, and indifferent who gave him such an enthusiastic reception on this, his first appearance for the season....
>
> Inside the mammoth pavilion, the largest ever built in America, all was a mass of living, laughing, joyous people, who sat through the entire performances, growing fat over the feast of fun and mirth that the exhibition produced.
>
> Everything was superior, from the world renowned Melville family through the entire list of actors and performers. The rendition of "Undine," in which appear a score of beautiful girls dancing the ballet, and also the uproarious "Can Can."
>
> Considering Yankee Robinson's show from the time it made its grand *entree* into Quincy until it closed its four excellent performances, we must say that it surpassed in grandeur and magnificence anything the American people have ever witnessed in the show line, and in saying this we but give the verdict of the people of Quincy. Yankee leaves us today for Camp Point, but he carries with him the assurance that whenever he returns to our city he will receive a generous reception.

Admission was 50 cents for adults and 25 cents for children. During the 1868 season the marvelous "Wallapus" was a great attraction, or at least it was billed as such, although it does not seem to have excited the Quincy newspaper reporters. In Robinson's own words:[1]

> There is a new monster at the Exposition. Whence came it? From Africa—tropical unknown. From Africa—land of slavery, palm oil, ebony, and the Wallapus. The strength of the Elephant, the ferocity of the Tiger, the craft of the Hyena, the shyness of the Gorilla—all these are united in the Wallapus.
>
> It is as untamable as the leopard, as bloodthirsty as the Lion. In the east of Ashant-Nyassa Lake dwells this wonderful creature. It tears in twain the Crocodiles that swarm that almost untrod region, and feasts upon their blood. Hidden beneath the shade of overreaching bamboo, it leaps out upon its unsuspecting prey and kills it at a blow. It is the terror of man and beast.
>
> To capture one had been the dream of African explorers. Vaillant tried it and failed; Dr. Livingstone[2] roused one from its lair by the Victoria Falls, but his frightened attendants said it was Ngara—a great spirit—and refused to pursue it. Du Chailln heard of it, Burton sought it, and so did Speke.[3] But none of them dared to plunge into that mighty uninhabited region, the Ngola Land, where it makes its home.[4]
>
> Then how come this wonder to American shores? Listen:
>
> Among the old party of Dr. Livingstone were some who were struck with the idea that to obtain one of these creatures alive would make their fortunes. It has.

---

[1] John A. Dingess, manuscript, from an unknown source, but probably *verbatim* from an early article.

[2] David Livingstone (1813-1873), famous Scottish missionary and explorer of Africa, whose extensive travels commenced in 1841 and extended for 15 years. Many of his findings were reported through the Royal Geographical Society. Livingstone returned to England in 1856, by which time his published accounts had made him a hero. He went back to Africa 1858-1864, and, later, made a third and final visit. In time of Robinson's narrative, he was well known worldwide.

[3] John Hanning Speke (1827-1864) explored Africa, including in association with Richard Burton (1821-1890). The two reached a great expanse of water in February 1858 and became the first Europeans to view what was subsequently named Lake Victoria, after the British queen. Accounts of these and other explorations during the height of British imperialism thrilled the world.

[4] Old spelling for what was later known as the Belgian Congo (Angola).

Two years ago they left the Cape of Good Hope. They told no one why they went. They would have been looked upon as insane.

They traveled northward through trackless deserts and hostile tribes. They suffered from heat and thirst. Some fell dead by the way, but they pushed on until they reached the great marshes of Ngola Land. It is the sublimity of desolation. Miles upon miles of slender reeds waving in the breeze; pool after pool of stagnant water swarming with Crocodiles and poisonous water snakes; bits of firm land where the Gorilla dwells and rears its young; nothing to eat, nothing to drink, yet everywhere water, everywhere life. What was to be done? Success seemed hopeless, but despair gives strength.

They entered the jungle, sinking to their waists in the slime they pressed on, seeing nothing, when suddenly one of the monsters of which they were in search sprang upon them. They fired, but before their shots took effect, two of their number were dead. But the Wallapus was dead also.

They tried again. They killed a Crocodile and tied his carcass to a tree with twisted lianas. They secreted themselves in the branches with trembling hearts. The Wallapus came. He attempted to bear off the body to his den, but the ropes held it too tightly. He drank his blood. Satiated, he fell asleep. But who should try the next step?

The boldest hunter descended and bound the monster's feet with cords. They took the leaves of the Ozambe tree and steeped them in water—no narcotic more powerful—and when he opened his mouth they poured it in.

With great labor and by slow journeys they carried him back to the Cape. Their reception was triumphal. England offered them thousands for it. In vain. To the New World went this monster, Africa to America greeting! He can now be seen, in his monster steel cage, with Yankee Robinson's Consolidated Shows.

The following *contemporary* information is from an advertisement placed in April 1868, announcing an appearance in Carthage, Missouri, on May 6th, and reflects the attractions at the beginning of the season:

Look Out for a Flood!

YANKEE ROBINSON'S CONSOLIDATED SHOWS!

Under the New Regime!

Immense Circus and Menageries in Separate Compartments for one ticket! Money and labor has been lavished without stint in order to compel everybody to acknowledge this to be the INSTITUTION OF THE ERA WE LIVE IN. A fortune has been consumed for a

Grand Spectacular Free Parade.

The Costliest of Gaudy Triumphal Cars, Vans, Chariots, Grotesque and Unique Vehicles, Carved and Gilded! Elephants, Camels, Horses, Ponies, etc., Magnificently Caparisoned! Beautiful Ladies in Dazzling Apparel! Mounted Knights in Real Armor! Masquerades in Original Comic Costumes, &c., &c. Making a Stream of Gold and Glitter Over a Mile Long! The tent covers nearly an acre....

Visitors can view the Animals without attending the Circus if desired. Improved Seats for All!

The Sea God Neptune's Glittering Ark. Over 20 feet high, driven by Old Nep himself, representing the throne of Undine, the Naiad Queen, surrounded by her Court of Beauty, Water Nymphs and Amazons, and attended by the Spirit of Darkness, robed in the handsomest and costliest dresses, without exception, ever seen in America.

The great Polyhymnia.... Mahomet [a camel], carrying the Veiled Parisian Beauty, led by her faithful slave, Shra, showing how the celestial travel in state.

A squad of grotesque masqueraders! The Gorilla Bride, Mammoth Rooster "Cock of the Walk," Donkey on Horseback, Mammoth Bull Frog, etc.

LOOK OUT,
For a Rare Specimen of Zoology,
The Only one Ever Captured Alive,
An Egyptian Wallapus!

Jet black, without hair. Weighs nearly 1,200 lbs. Acknowledged by all Asiatic [*sic!*] hunters to be the most savage animal known to the civilized race.

The first ever on exhibition,
The Sea Cow!
Or Aquatic Bison
A new importation

No Second Class Performers.... James Melville, the Greatest Rider living, no exception. Lazelle Brothers, graduated first in their class of Gymnastics. Australian Family can't be beat. Master Alexandre, the baby rider and handsomest child in the business. Madame Melville, [unclear]. George Haskins [unclear]. Kit Carson, Jr., with his school of educated bears. Charles Parker, a No. 1 clown. Jerry Hopper, Clown Secundo, &c., &c., &c.

Grand Ballet of Twelve Parisienne Beauties!

Yankee Robinson's Flying Golden Dragon drawn by his matched team with gold-mounted harness.

Australian Wombat, only one ever on exhibition. Mountain of Flesh, "Rosicus" [elephant], largest on the continent....

Will Exhibit at Carthage
On Wednesday, May 6th, 1868

Admission 50 Cts. Children under 10 years, 25 cents.

The marvelous Wallapus was a rather small specimen of a water buffalo, also called the water ox, rare in the American Midwest to be sure, but a familiar sight on the other side of the world. An adult water buffalo, a beast of labor and burden, weighs a ton or more, or about twice the size of the featured Wallapus. Robinson's commentary notwithstanding, the *herbivorous* animals were widely domesticated and used as draft animals and for milk in Africa and, particular, in southeast Asia. At the end of their useful life they would be slaughtered for their meat. However, an angry water buffalo could be very dangerous.

This was an era of fantastical animals in circus advertising—and Yankee Robinson and others also depicted beasts that resembled lions, horses equipped with horns, chimpanzees billed as gorillas, zebras presented as unique "striped horses," etc.

In Robinson's show the fear-inspiring Wallapus was left to walk from one town to another with the troupe and to graze along the way, but before the public was admitted, it was placed in its sturdy cage, with chains laying around as props.

An account published years later related that in 1868:[1]

> M. Smith of Philadelphia invested $60,000 in the show. W.C. Coup was the assistant-manager. The street-procession was described as a 'stream of gold and glitter a mile long.' It carried everything before it, and its success was prodigious. Among the company were James Melville and family, Howard Dorr and A.S. Burt (agent in advance).

Coup recalled an incident from his days with the Yankee Robinson troupe:[2]

> The advertising agents for a large circus of the present day would, no doubt, get a good deal of amusement from the tales of the experiences of the advertising men who traveled in advance of the old-time wagon show. One time when I was traveling with a show owned by a man named Yankee Robinson we discovered that we were almost entirely out of showbills. We were for a time in a serious quandary — but we were not to be downed in this manner. We finally fired a "democrat" wagon and with a single bill in our possession started out to bill the country from which we hoped to draw our patrons.[3]
>
> At the gate of every farmer we stopped and called loudly. When the king of the soil appeared we would hand him the bill and allow him to read it; then we would take the bill and ride on to the next house. It was tedious work, but we succeeded in drawing our crowd and felt repaid for our efforts.

The success of a traveling show was often measured by the number of horses it contained. This undated photograph of Yankee Robinson's entourage shows dozens! (State Historical Society of Wisconsin's Circus World Museum, Baraboo, Wisconsin)

During the 1868 travel season, Yankee Robinson's route included these towns (partial listing):[4]

Yankee Robinson's
Route for 1868

Illinois: May 1: Quincy • May 12: Virginia • May 13: Jacksonville • May 15: Springfield • May 21: El Paso • May 23: Peoria

Iowa: June 9: Des Moines • June 12: Nevada

Wisconsin: July 11-12: Milwaukee

Indiana: August 10 (about): Indianapolis

Illinois: August 4 (?): Kankakee

Michigan: August 24: Grand Rapids • September 3: Marshall • September 4: Battle Creek • September 5: Union • September 7: Burr Oak • September 8: Coldwater • September 9: Jonesville • September 10: Hillsdale • September 29: Pontiac • October 1: Detroit

Ohio: October 6: Toledo • October 9: Defiance • October 30: Dayton

A later account described several incidents of the season:[5]

> By July 10 Milwaukee had the show and was credited with the longest parade in that city of any circus.... At Hudson, Michigan, Mr. Robinson was struck by a broken quarter pole, resulting in a broken ankle. When the show reached Toledo, Ohio, while walking on crutches he stepped in a stake hole, fell, and again broke the partially healed ankle.

In the winter of 1868-9 *The New York Clipper* ran a stock notice:[6] "Yankee Robinson's address is at Chicago, Ill. Letters so addressed will always reach him." This editorial notice indicated a transition in business and that the performer may have been short of capital: "Yankee Robinson is desirous of securing a moneyed partner to travel during the winter and play with a traveling company through the country."

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[1] Recollection published in the Baraboo *Republic*, May 14, 1884.

[2] *Sawdust and Spangles*, p.237, this being a error-laden, ghost written account published posthumously.

[3] Democrat wagon: A light wagon, drawn by a single horse and usually fitted with two seats—for fast travel and light loads.

[4] Notes by Richard E. Conover; Circus World Museum archives.

[5] Charles Bernard, "Old-Time Showmen," *The Billboard*, May 4, 1935. Much of the information was taken from back issues of the *New York Clipper*, dates not cited.

[6] Citations from the issue of December 19, 1868.

Great Success in 1869

From February 8 through 13, 1869, Yankee Robinson was the stage star at Wood's Theatre, Cincinnati, in a variety show.[1] In this year he also issued cent-sized copper tokens from the Stanton shop in the same city. The author has not learned how these were distributed. At the time, regular federal Indian Head cents were abundant in circulation, and the era of Civil War tokens was long past—although in the Midwest, they still circulated in quantity.

As the warmer months approached, he readied his traveling troupe, signing acts, side-show operators, and employees. For a time, success furthered success. According to one historian, in 1869 Yankee Robinson's Circus and Menagerie is said to have earned "this year perhaps more money than any previous tent show in the country."[2] If so, this was the one of the better years of his career, although it seems to have generated less press ink than the well-covered travels of the year before.

P.A. Older, a partner in the show since 1865, helped with arrangements, but at year's end the financial arrangement with Robinson was dissolved. The *New York Clipper* ran this on January 8, 1870:

> The co-partnership which has been existing between Yankee Robinson and P.A. Older for five years has been neutrally dissolved, next season the Yankee takes to the road on his own account. Talent as well as props are wanted by Yankee Robinson for his traveling show this coming tenting season.

Selected notices from the *New York Clipper* reflect Yankee Robinson's 1869 season and certain events regarding M'lle Sanyeah:

March 18, 1869

> Yankee Robinson, the famous showman in connection with circuses, more particularly has ensconced himself in sock and buskin pro tem, and is making first appearance as a comedian in various places. On the 5th he debuted at Buffalo, and made a hit, judging from the appended quotations from the *Courier* and *Post*
>
> "The Academy of Music was filled last night upon the occasion of the benefit of the brilliant gymnast, Mlle Sanyeah, and the first appearance of 'Yankee' Robinson. Mlle, by her good looks, graceful manner, fine figure, and successful acrobatic feats has hosts of admirers. Yankee Robinson made his first bow to a Buffalo audience, in his first appearance on the stage in five years; and, considering that he is a little out of practice, he sustained himself in capital style. His role was that of Darius Dutton in the drama—new hair—of 'True Love.' In makeup Mr. Robinson is the tradition of Yankee to the life, but his avoidance of forcing their nasal passages into vocal service is altogether in his favor. He is the voluble Yankee, the sayer of 'cute things,' the knowing Yankee, the irrepressible Yankee, to perfection. We hadn't scarcely dreamed that Mr. Robinson had so much of the essence of fun in his composition, and not withstanding his national reputation as a "showman," but we know him better now, and we hope to see him occasionally on our boards when his management of his own Mammoth Show will admit of it.
>
> "Academy of Music — Farewell appearance of the Sanyeahs and Yankee Robinson. The benefit of Mlle Sanyeah, which took place last evening, was largely attended. It was hardly a vacant seat. The beneficiary once more appeared in her daring performances and delighted everybody. In the concluding piece, entitled 'True Love,' never performed here before, the great and original Yankee Robinson appeared for the first time in Buffalo. It is a pity he was unable to perform here all week, for he would have created a furor, and taken the city by storm, as was very evident in the reception he met with in the hands of the audience. We are satisfied that if he could remain here during next week, there would be no standing room, and he would create as much of a sensation among the theatre goers as Chantrau did in his great character of Sam or John Owens' as Solon Shingle. He is justly entitled to the name 'Yankee Robinson,' for we have never seen an actor that was more of a *genuine* Yankee in his impersonation. In fact, he is a Yankee all over, in makeup, speech, and demeanor, and he can dance 'old country style' to perfection—you bet."

March 27, 1869

> The Sanyeah, Yankee Robinson Enterprise, has provided success we are informed. In Forest City, Ohio, more particularly, it made a decided hit, which is endorsed by the appended quotation from the Cleveland *Herald:*
>
> "There was a crowded house last evening at the Academy. The public seemed anxious to testify their

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[1] Russell James Grandstaff, *A History of the Professional Theatre in Cincinnati, 1861-1888.* Ph. D. dissertation for the University of Michigan, 1963.

[2] C.G. Sturtevant, "Yankee Robinson," *The White Tops,* September 1928, who did not cite the source of any of his information (although most of Sturtevant's text was copied *verbatim* from earlier accounts, but he furnished no credits). Giving source credits was an unknown practice to many twentieth-century circus historians. • Later reprinted widely, including in such popular books as, Tom Ogden, *200 Years of the American Circus,* published by Facts on File; and John and Alice Durant, *Pictorial History of the American Circus,* Cranbury, NJ: A.S. Barnes & Co., 1957, p. 319.

appreciation of the remarkable accomplishments of the MLLE. Sanyeah as a gymnast filled the house on occasion of her first and only benefit. Besides this there was an extra inducement for attendance and the first appearance in this city of the renowned and widely known Yankee Robinson in one of his great specialties that is the character of Darius Dutton, in the prize comedy of 'True Love.'

"The race of Yankee comedians has become nearly extinct, and it is seldom that we have the routine of the later day sensational drama broken in a pond by this style of performance. But taking the very large audience of last evening as a criterion, we think we are safe in saying that the Yankee drama, with all its improbabilities and exaggerations, still has a hold upon the public, and when presented in anything like a respectable manner, is sure to meet with a generous response. Yankee Robinson made his first appearance before the public of this city last evening and created more fun than we have had since the time when Dan Marble in Yankee Hill were want to shake the sides of the theatre goers.

"In dress, action and dialect, Mr. Robinson is a veritable stage Yankee. This gentleman has been known pretty extensively as a manager of one of the most popular combination shows that has traveled through the country for several years past, but in the new (for us) field of dramatic representation he is now reaping new honors. They perform at Indianapolis this week."

April 3, 1869

In Chicago under the auspices of fine weather, the various places of amusement were very well attended in the past week. Our correspondent, "loiterer," sends us a following summary, under date of March 24th:

"The Galtons remain this week only at Crosby's and are followed by the irrepressible Yankee Robinson and the Sanyeahs..."

April 17, 1869

Yankee Robinson's consolidated shows are billed for Dayton, Ohio on the 12th, the first stand of the season.

May 6, 1869

Yankee Robinson's circus and menagerie exhibits in Columbus, Ohio on May 10th.

May 22, 1869

Yankee Robinson had a gorgeous chariot in the procession at Chicago on the 10th, in honor of the opening of the U.P.R.R. It was a magnificent affair and is replete with the splendor of gold, mirrors and highly colored representations of the Sanyeah. The "Yankee" opens there soon, for a week or more. The reported accident to Mad Sanyeah, over which the dailies have been preaching such long winded sermons, turns out to be without the slightest foundation. A letter just received and dated Cardington, Ohio, May 12th, says: "Mad. Sanyeah has not met with the slightest accident, and all the rumors concerning her fall are totally false. So ends that." Madame Sanyeah the graceful and agile female athlete, has proven to be quite an attractive card with Yankee Robinson's circus. And crowded tents are reported as the order of the day on her account. M. [Monsieur, her partner] Sanyeah is also credited with being a number 1 muscleman. See their card in the *Clippers* advertising columns.

[Advertisement] Notice!!! It is untrue, has been reported in many of the leading papers in America, that Madame Sanyeah, the Queen Gymnast, fell in her performance. This artist has not met with any accident whatever and she is as competent in her undertakings. The wonder of the century: the beautiful and graceful Madame Sanyeah, Queen Gymnast, is now creating a great sensation through the United States with Yankee Robinson's Consolidated Circus, and daily executes her daring leap from one end of the canvas to the other, distance of 90 feet, and exhibits her marvelous skill on the flying rings and trapeze. Madame Sanyeah has again taken her position in the arena after a lapse of three years, and performs her graceful and daring equestrian acts on her flying charger Mac. A new sensation: M. Sanyeah, the muscular, and Madame Sanyeah, the graceful, are now executing their new and original Double Leap for Life. M. Sanyeah, with ease, carries Madame Sanyeah from the platform to the trapeze, which is received with tremendous applause. This feat has never been attempted by any other artist, and is entitled the "Sanyeah Leap."

June 5, 1869

Yankee Robinson's advertising wagon seems to be one of the attractive features of his show, and lends very material aid to the success of the season. We are not alone in this opinion, as is evident by the appended quotation from the Cleveland *Herald* and *Plain Dealer*, respectably of the 28th:

"The greatest advertising wagon known: the idea of advertising by wagon is not new, but Yankee Robinson outstrips all competitors in this style, size, and finish of his immense vehicle for that purpose. His longer, wider, and higher than a street car, but all its parts are put together so perfectly that the whole structure moves along with greater ease than any street car. It is drawn by eight beautiful bay horses, handsomely harnessed, the whole costing enough money to start many of the small one horse shows that are perambulating through the country. It is a foretaste of the show itself, the proprietor may well say: 'wait till the boss comes!' This elegant and highly useful car is now going from street to street, carrying the advertising peripheral of the circus, comprising eight men and thousands of illuminated bills, posters, hand bills, programmes, circulars, dodgers, etc., all of which the men are scattering far and wide with the greatest profusion. A description of the attractive paintings upon the outside of this mammoth wagon would take more space than is now at our command.

"Let us suffice to say that among the most conspicuous representations are scenes displaying the thrilling feats of the greatest female gymnast in the world—Madame Sanyeah. 'Greatest' is a great big word. Meaning more than one would imagine at first thought, but the feats of this lady at the Academy will justify the use of the word upon this occasion. She is not only the greatest gymnast, but displays the most exquisite form that imagination can conceive, and is among the most modest and graceful of her sex. The paintings upon the wagon are handsome, but the most skillful hand could scarcely paint a flattering picture of Sanyeah.

"Immense French glass mirrors decorate each side. A fine representation of the Garden of Eden as we love to believe it existed in the days of Adam and Eve, is presented on the rare end of the wagon. They are seated beneath the spreading branches of a tree that looks charming in its beautiful foliage, and are surrounded with all the beauties that would go toward making any spot a paradise. Flags and banners crown the whole, combining attractions seldom witnessed in connection with the most lucrative establishments of the land. The wagon, like Yankee Robinson's show, must be seen to be appreciated.

"A Robinsonian idea: Yankee Robinson is a genius in more senses than one. He has long been known as an actor of merit, and a successful manager of popular amusement; but few people have ever had an idea of his resources and bringing his different ventures before the public. His ingenuity seems to be inexhaustible. For the past day or two there has been seen flashing through our streets, meteor-like, one of the most beautiful and gorgeous vehicles imaginable; original design, and elaborate detail. It is the car which the advertising brigade, consisting of eight men, will have their home during the time in which Yankee Robinson's great show shall perambulate this glorious country during the year 1869. The car has attracted entitles it to something more than a passing notice, especially if it starts from this city on its seasons travels. It is constructed after original design by Yankee Robinson himself. As it moves along the street the general appearance would indicate that one of Hurdett's grand organs had suddenly taken wheels and was perambulating through the country on a pleasure excursion.

"On the front is to be seen a representation of the grand procession of the show as it appears in the streets of every town it visits. Each side is composed of immense French glass mirrors on which are artistically painted a representation of an organ, the illusion being so nearly perfect as to deceive the closest observer.

"Above the supposed organ are scenes taken from the acts of the greatest of all the female gymnasts, Madame Sanyeah, as well as cupids showering imaginary amounts of 'filthy lucre' among the excited and eager crowd, and at the base are seen, sporting in an imaginary sea a blissful scene of beautiful mermaids and dolphins, while birds of paradise are floating through the air and all their gorgeous plumage, thus adding to the general magnificence of the design. Upon the rear end is to be seen a pleasing and splendid representation of what is supposed to be the Garden of Eden, when Adam and Eve were there in all their glory. They appeared surrounded by all the beauties of the floral world, and all the animals that sacred history tells us when into the arc are seen in a sportive mood.

"There are two grotto doors, upon each side of which the irrepressible Yankee Robinson is seen in citizen's dress, the size of life, standing upon a marble pedestal, the other side is a representation of the same individual in Yankee character, perched on a stump, in which is conspicuously stuck the traditional jackknife. Between the two is a splendid marine clock in full operation, surrounded by a halo representing the sun and all its midday brilliancy. At the base are seen dolphins, mermaids, etc. The carriage is divided into two compartments, for the accommodation and convenience of the immense advertising that is done for this great show.

"The plain and illuminated posters and hand bills, programmes, circulars, dodges, etc., are all carried along, to be scattered far and wide in the greatest perfusion. This large and gorgeous establishment is drawn by six beautiful bright bay horses, the harness being in perfect harmony with the main affair in all its essentials. This car is fully as long, and a foot wider, than the ordinary street car. Four large American flags are placed on the corners, and it is often necessary to lower them when passing under telegraph wires and bridges. The cost of the car, horses, and harnesses equal to an entire outfit for some of the circuses that have traveled through the country, and is a most showy wagon that was ever constructed in America. If the balance of the show is equal to the *avant courier* we may confidently look for something grand and brilliant."

Madame Sanyeah, whose real flights and graceful equestrianism…have proven to be among the leading features of Yankee Robinson's circus of the season, may be negotiated with for starring engagements after November 1st by addressing her as instructed in the Ladies' Card in the *Clipper's* advertising column.

[Advertisement] The wonder of the 19th Century! The greatest sensation traveling. Madame Sanyeah in her terrific flights through the mid-air and daring feats on the lofty trapeze. Ms. Madame Sanyeah in three leaps, including M. and Madame Sanyeah's new and original Double Leap for Life, both starting from the platform and landing on the trapeze at the same time. The most thrilling feat ever accomplished by any artists. The leap is entitled the "Sanyeah Leap." Madame Sanyeah in her graceful equestrian acts on the flying charger "Mac," now performing with Yankee Robinson's circus. At liberty for starring engagements the commencement of November all letters to be addressed to the *Clipper* office.

June 12, 1869

Yankee Robinson has been proverbial for placing upon the road, luggage, vans, private carriages and band wagons for a circus company, equal, if not superior in design and magnificence to those of any other manager in the country. It is seldom that the paste brigade, as the bill posters are termed, receive as much attention as the Yankee has given his party this season, for the wagon, in which they are perambulated through the country, from its description, beats anything yet put ahead of a circus company.

June 19, 1869

Yankee Robinson's circus had a densely crowded audience within its pavilion in Cleveland, Ohio, June 9th, and the entertainment has said to have given great satisfaction. The concern was in Chagrin Falls on the 11th and was to go then to Wooster, Ravenna, Warren, and through the oil regions.

June 24, 1869

Yankee Robinson's circus visited Alliance, Ohio.

June 26, 1869

Yankee Robinson's circus was in Ashland, Ohio, 16th, and Mansfield, 17th.

July 3, 1869

Yankee Robinson's Consolidated Shows will make Meadville, Pennsylvania, for July 3rd, and Franklin the 5th, after which the concern will make a detour of [through] the oil regions.

August 7, 1869

Yankee Robinson's circus and Menagerie is doing a good business along the Lake Shore Road. The concern will be in Dunkirk, New York, the 3rd, Gowanda the 4th, and opens in Buffalo on the 6th for two weeks.

August 21, 1869

Yankee Robinson's circus showed at Rochester, New York, the 14th. The Yankee has 25 different styles of advertisements, besides his regular newspaper cuts and posters, for billing.

August 28, 1869

Yankee Robinson is a name identified with circus business since 1835. Many years ago he made a tent with his own hands in Rock Island, Illinois, then started the Robinson Athenaeum, traveled throughout the far west. From that time up to the present he has been actively pursuing the circus business, occasionally appearing on the stage as an actor, and has played Yankee characters with considerable success.

Of late years he has enjoyed a reputation second to no manager for organizing and successfully running one of the largest and most extensive Menageries in circuses extent. The concern that he has on the road this summer is highly spoken of by our correspondence, the following complimentary notice is from the press of Rochester, where Yankee did a big business only two weeks ago:

"Great Success. Yankee Robinson's Big Show met with an overwhelming reception on Saturday afternoon and evening on both occasions, and his visit to Rochester has been a triumph, both at a popular and financial point of view, which seldom falls to the lot of show managers. His establishment is of immense proportions. His performances rank high on a scale of perfection in the equestrian, calisthenics and acrobatic departments. Many of which are entirely new and never before seen in connection with the circus. Heretofore here, Charles Parker, clown, in his great guilt act and his humorous comicalities, succeeded in creating a favorable impression, as well as all the artists, gymnasts, and equestrians, connected with the concern, and to particularize names would seem invidious. Sanyeah, female gymnast, as part announcement, is veritably the sparkling sensation of this popular show." —*Daily Chronicle.*

The above concern is wending its way through New York State through this city.

A full page advertisement in the same issue of the *New York Clipper,* August 28, 1869, proclaimed:

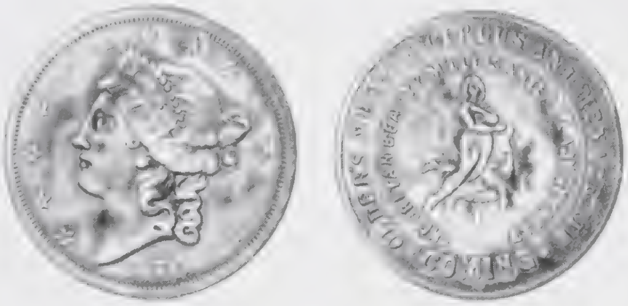
"First visit to the state of New York. Yankee Robinson's Consolidated Shows," and depicted Yankee Robinson standing on a pedestal in which the date 1818, his birth, was lettered. Illustration included Roscius, an elephant with a howdah or covered passenger container mounted on top, the Great Polyhymnia, two bears standing on a platform and each waving an American flag, a trainer separated by a standing menacing lion and tiger to each side, "Yankee Robinson's Ballet of Persian Beauties, May Pole Dance," "Yankee Robinson's Ballet of Beautiful Ladies, Amazon March," gymnasts performing in an auditorium (not tent) with balconies and orchestra patrons looking on, various wild animals, and this text:

> Menagerie, Circus, Ballet make room for the wide track wagons early in the forenoon, and every principal place in the state. If anybody has doubts about Yankee Robinson's immense establishment being the largest on earth! Count the men and women. Count the horses, ponies and mules. Count the animal dens, count the magnificent cars, count the knights in armor. Count the double humped white baby camel. View the grand pageant. The Polyhymnia ahead! The double humped camel team! Etc., etc., etc., etc. Measure the colossal tent. Count the days expenses. Give it up and see the show. "Not a shabby act goes in the ring.
>
> Sanyeah!" Female gymnast. The most daring woman in the world. Price same as when this was a "one horse" show, 50¢, children under 9 years old, 25¢, ample arrangements made to avoid a jam at the ticket offices. The eleven-tier seats when filled make the

grandest display of humanity ever seen, since the days of the Roman Hippodrome. Fair warning: secure your teams to prevent runaways when this Wide Track show comes. "Stand Down in the Hall.

September 4, 1869

Yankee Robinson is fast making his way eastward, and will be in Oswego, Syracuse and Springfield this week. On August 23rd Mr. Robinson took his Mammoth establishment to Honeoye Lake, a small village near Canandaigua, and containing a population of only 200 persons, men, women and children, and strange to say, the Yankee had the largest crowd that has been seen in his large pavilion at any day show this season. The secret of this is, it was the birth place of Mr. Robinson and the first time the circus company has visited the town in 40 years. Mr. Robinson says it is a great compliment.



1870-dated shell card brass advertising token featuring Older's Museum Circus and Menagerie and showcasing M'lle Sanyeah, the gymnast who had been with Yankee Robinson earlier and who would be billed with Robinson in 1870 as well.

The obverse of the token is a copy of the 1870 American $20 gold coin. Such shell cards were made in hundreds of different varieties during this era and were widely distributed.

October 3, 1869

[Part of a review of the tenting season] Yankee Robinson had one of the most extensive and complete organizations on the road, and while the receipts have averaged $1,200 a day throughout the season, no money has been saved, for the expenses have been very great. The Yankee organized and started from Dayton, Ohio, peregrinated through Ohio, the oil regions of Pennsylvania, came down the Lake Shore Road through New York State, closing this week.

The animals will winter in Wood's Museum, this city, while the balance of the stock will winter with the honest Dutchess County farmer at Claverack. No concern on the road has been better or more extensively advertised than this.

October 9, 1869

Yankee Robinson is in town [New York City] this week, making preliminary arrangements for the winter.

December 4, 1869

Yankee Robinson's address is Earl's Hotel, this city [New York City].

December 25, 1869

Yankee Robinson offers for sale all the inside and outside privileges connected with his circus for the coming tenting season.

Yankee Robinson's Great Consolidated Show (1870)

Robinson's erstwhile partner P.A. Older went on to operate Older's Museum Circus and Menagerie from 1870 to 1872. An 1870-dated token issued by Older features, per the inscription, "THE CRETAN BEAUTY M'LLE SANYEAH LADY GYMNAST," around a seemingly *nude* woman with one leg on a chair. However, she toured with Robinson in 1870 as well.

The 1870 season opened on April 10 in Dayton, Ohio, going soon thereafter to Columbus. On the 24th of the same month a stand was made in Lebanon, north of Cincinnati. On June 8-9 performances were conducted in Cleveland.

A headline attraction in 1870 was M'lle Geraldine Sanyeah, "the beautiful Grecian Gymnast, with 'Yankee' Robinson's Circus, Menagerie and Ballet. Appears at every performance. Most daring and graceful gymnast in the world." In the style of P.T. Barnum, it seems that Robinson endeavored to create an American sensation with an obscure (probably) European performer. An illustrated booklet published in Chicago in 1870 and distributed during the 1870 season, includes the following information (excerpts):[1]

History of M'lle Geraldine

> In the engagement of the Sanyeahs [Geraldine and her husband] for the traveling season of 1870, the liberality and enterprise of the management of YANKEE ROBINSON'S GREAT CONSOLIDATED SHOW is exemplified to a remarkable degree. The beautiful Grecian was one of the most prominent sensations in Europe, and those whose profession it is to cater for the amusement of the American public understand full well the difficulty and expense in securing such a luminary while in the heyday of her brilliancy, and bearing her triumphantly upon a transatlantic trip from the

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[1] A copy preserved by the Circus World Museum indicates it was distributed in Orrville, Ohio, on October 5.

> enterprising managerial capitalists of London, Paris, Vienna, Berlin, and St. Petersburg.
>
> In this negotiation Yankee Robinson outdistanced all competitors, but it has been upon terms hardly second to the famous Jenny Lind contract; the price of success being a golden compact of startling proportion. Indefatigable in his research for novelty of a high and startling character which in its excellence and originality shall constitute an elevated distinction from the usual routine of circus performances, he has, season by season, more nearly perfected his ideal of a model exhibition, until he now presents to the community a combination which in magnitude and excellence has never been approached in any previous organization.
>
> The history of this beautiful and accomplished lady is replete with romantic incident, and there is sufficient of thrilling interest to constitute an ample field for the novelist.
>
> Her father was Charles Edward Percy, an Englishman by birth and ancestry, and an offshoot of the historical house of Northumberland. Of large and liberal temperament, he soon dissipated the patrimony of a younger son when through the influence of his aristocratic connections he was appointed British consul to the Isle of Crete, where he soon became enamored of a beautiful Grecian lady, the daughter of a marine captain, by whom he had an only child, the subject of this narrative....

The narrative went on to relate that Percy became involved in a fight to liberate Crete from "Moslem tyranny" and was shot through the head, and killed, while his wife "was sabered by the brutal soldiery." Their one-year-old daughter—the nascent gymnast Geraldine—then known as Lelia, was rescued by a Turkish officer who took her to Constantinople, where she was placed under the care of a concubine owned by a bashaw in the Moslem army. In a series of escapades the concubine and Lelia escaped into the mountains in a party which "was suddenly surprised by a ferocious animal, a species of Asiatic tiger," etc. Later, they arrived at Smyrna, where Lelia, now a young lady, "received early tuition in those graceful exercises which were destined to excite the admiration of the most critical and fastidious audiences of the new world."

However, the group of refugees, including Lelia, then 10 years old, was captured by Russian soldiers. She came to the attention of a Russian navy captain, who succeeded in "transferring her to his own vessel, a sloop of war, then lying in the harbor of Odessa." Later she was wrecked at sea, continued her education, performed before royalty, etc., then secured her freedom, went to England for a brief time, then as a gymnast dazzled audiences in St. Petersburg, then headed for London:

> Soon after public announcement was made in the newspapers of the coming appearance of the beautiful Grecian gymnast, and a large audience assembled at the London Pantheon to witness her debut. It was the great success of the season.... Offers of engagement were made by provincial and continental managers, the most lucrative of which was by the director of the Cirque Olympique, Paris. Here her success fully equaled her London triumph.... After performing successively in Vienna, Berlin, and St. Petersburg, she was offered a large inducement to appear [again] in London, where she created an unexampled *furor.*
>
> It was during this engagement, the past winter, that the Sanyeahs fell under the observation of Yankee Robinson, who at once determined to secure them for an American campaign, to effect which, however, he had to outbid his European competitors with a golden bait of huge proportion.
>
> Their compact, however, will expire at the end of the season, as they have already brilliant offers to return at its conclusion, so that they will be exclusively associated, while in this country, with Yankee Robinson's Great Consolidated Show.

A Yankee Robinson bill announcing Geraldine illustrates her suspended from a rope looped around the neck of an inverted male gymnast dangling from an aerial trapeze bar. The American tour of Geraldine must have been modest, for, unlike Jenny Lind, she was soon forgotten by the general public, although she toured with Robinson for some years afterward, including in appearances in San Francisco, and was variously billed as Madame Sanyeah and Miss Lelia. As noted, she seems to have been connected with P.A. Older for a time as well. Regarding the acrobat, circus historian William L. Slout gives the following, an account somewhat divergent from the romantic tale just related:[1]

> Sanyeah, Mme. Maude [real name Phoebe Frost]. (1841?-June 25, 1910). From Carlisle, England. Flying rings and leaps for life with Samuel Sanyeah. In the act she flew by means of suspended rings to be caught by her partner who was hanging by his feet from the bar of a fixed trapeze.
>
> "The handsomest woman in America," Yankee Robinson's in 1869. Charles Noyes', 1871. P.A. Older's 1870-72.
>
> Billed as "Empress of the Air" and "Flying Meteor." Divorced or was never officially married, and was wedded to John Conklin, San Francisco, November 4, 1872. Later had performing dogs. Died Lambeth, England, Infirmary, 1869.

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[1] *Olympians of the Sawdust Circle: A Biographical Dictionary of the Nineteenth Century American Circus,* p. 267. The text also notes that Samuel Sanyeah (real name Samuel Haynes) lived from circa 1835 to August 26, 1900. His death occurred by drowning, in Kankakee, Illinois, by which time he had been placed in a hospital for the insane.

According to tradition, in 1870, seeking to capitalize on his excellent past season, Robinson divided his show into two parts. A 98-horse contingent toured into Canada, ending the season at Portsmouth, Ohio, apparently without registering a profit. One historian wrote that the Canadian troupe was under the direction of Yankee Robinson, and experienced poor business, while the other troupe was leased out by Robinson and the new operators failed in just 23 days.[1]

According to another historian, in 1870 the main contingent left Hudson, New York, on April 30.[2] Plans included touring New York State with these stops: Booneville (June 20), Constable (June 21), Lowville (June 22), Carthage (June 23), Antwerp (June 24), and Theresa (June 25). However, the show "collapsed" at Bloomington, Indiana, on May 27.[3] In the meantime, a note in the *Troy* (New York) *Times*, May 5, 1870, voiced an objection to women riding in the style of men—straddling the saddle—while riding through the countryside between engagements. To be proper, the women should have been riding sidesaddle, it was suggested.

Later in the summer, in the week previous to August 27, stops were planned by Yankee Robinson's section of the show at Oswego, Auburn, Rome, and Syracuse. Among the attractions was "Victoria," a baby elephant. In early autumn the troupe was in Ohio, stopping at Canton (October 3), Massillon (October 4), and Mansfield (October 8). The last show was given in Ohio in Portsmouth.

An advertisement in the Ohio weekly, *Canton Repository Republican*, October 3, 1870, illustrated Yankee Robinson and a dragon pony chariot, but makes no mention of a street parade to be held before the show.[4]

A later story noted that in 1870 Madame Sanyeah, female gymnast, was the big attraction, the show taking perhaps more money than any previous tent-show in the country, although this is a non-contemporary comment.[5] Her supposed husband, Mons. Sanyeah, was also in the entourage, but they had separated on August 9, 1869, and now Madame Sanyeah, a.k.a., Geraldine, a.k.a. Lelia, was Mrs. George Holland.[6] W.C. Coup was said to have been the assistant manager, and J.M. Chandler and W.C. Crum were advance agents; number of horses, 220.

On October 4th a spring wagon painted with the name of Yankee Robinson Circus & Menagerie broke down at the intersection of Hampton and 3rd streets in Quincy, a minor note involving a light vehicle—not a main circus wagon.[7] On November 26, the *New York Clipper* reported that Robinson's show had suddenly disbanded in Greensburg, Kentucky, earlier in the month.

At this point, it seems that the history of Yankee Robinson for the year 1870 is anything but consistent.

Mammoth Circus and Show of the Period (1871)

A note in the *New York Clipper*, April 1, 1871, related that Robinson's show was to start from Louisville under the management of [Daniel] Scott and Smith and would feature a 29-piece Great Belgian Band and a nine-piece drum corps. Already, the same trade journal had noted that the company would travel by rail this year.[8]

Newspaper advertisements of the year describe the show for 1871, called in some listings "His Mammoth Circus and Show of the Period," although no single headline seems to have been used exclusively. An advertisement announcing an engagement in Vincennes, Indiana, was illustrated by the Wallapus, an equestrienne standing on one foot on horseback, a man riding a jumping elephant, and a contingent of ballet dancers. The text featured a new or at least somewhat current attraction, "Stand Down the Hall," a comic dialogue by Robinson that was to be included in his show for the next several years:

> **"Stand Down the Hall,"**
> **for the**
> **Original Yankee Robinson is Coming!**
> With his Show of the Period, containing more novelties than any other circus and menagerie! On the road. Will exhibit at Vincennes, Thursday, May 18th, 1871. Afternoon and evening. Admission 50 cents, Children 25 cents.

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[1] Notes by Tom Parkinson preserved by the Circus World Museum. Another account states that the troupe was leased to Enoch and Everett and failed in just 21 days.

[2] Notes by the late Richard E. Conover; Circus World Museum archives. Certain planned route dates from the *New York Clipper*, May 7, 1870.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] Recollection published in the Baraboo *Republic*, May 14, 1884.

[6] Notes by the late Richard E. Conover; Circus World Museum archives. • M'lle Sanyeah married John Conklin in 1872, as noted elsewhere in the present text. • The *New York Clipper*, October 8, 1870, noted that Mons. and Madame Sanyeah, double trapeze artists, were at liberty. Both, individually and together, would work now and then with Robinson through 1875.

[7] *Quincy Herald*, October 5, 1870.

[8] Issue of March 11, 1871.

> A Grand Balloon Ascension will be made by a Young Lady half an hour before the performance in the afternoon. Free to All!

This was rather tame copy in comparison to that used a few years earlier. A listing for an appearance in Wisconsin contains different wording and emphasis:

> Make Way for the King of Showmen,
> For
> YANKEE ROBINSON
>
> Is coming with his Mammoth Circus and Show of the Period. Embracing more new and novel attractions under the canvas than any other Circus or Menagerie in the world.
>
> 30 Star Performers! Sixteen Pretty Girls! Count them as they enter the ring....
>
> Will exhibit at Manitowoc, Wednesday, June 21st, afternoon and evening. Read the bills and see the show!
>
> For Yankee will be there himself with his big hat and gun.
>
> Geo. B. Hudson, Agent.

The June 17, 1871, issue of *New York Clipper* noted that the circus performed in Muskegon, Michigan, on June 10. The show was scheduled to open at Louisville, Kentucky, on June 24.

The Sheboygan (Wisconsin) *Times*, Saturday, June 24, 1871, ran this item:

> Yankee Robinson was here with his show, according to appointment, on Tuesday, and was well patronized. The trapeze performances of Mlle. Belle King and Mr. King were remarkable. Those of the Miaco brothers also were excellent. The riding of little Katie, eight years old, was really meritorious. The rest of the "show" was quite ordinary.

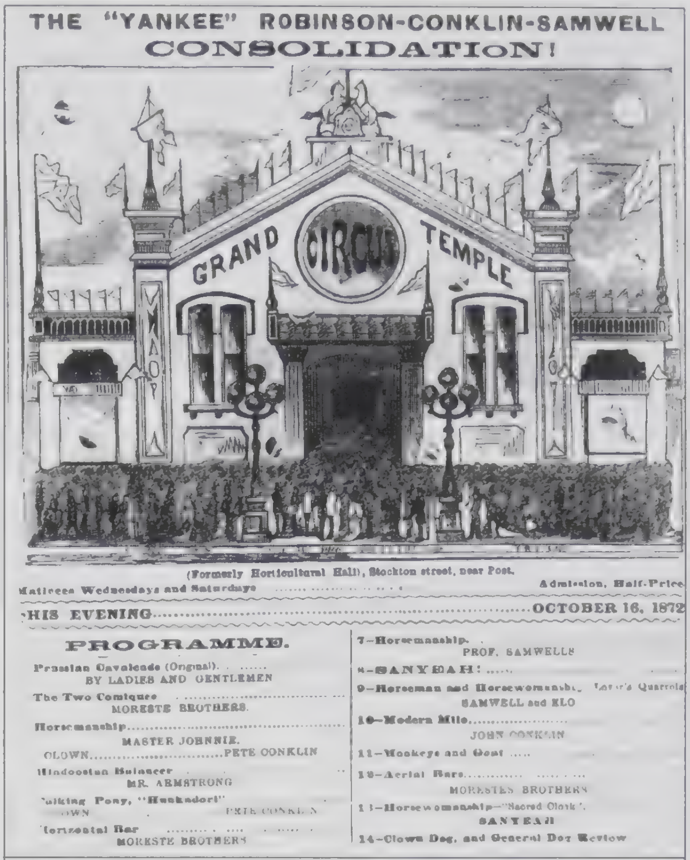
One might conclude that the 1871 season was rather humdrum, with "ordinary" being appropriate.

Heading West (1872)

In 1872, using rail and steamship during the season, the troupe started the season at Marshall, Michigan, and performed a long schedule, closing in San Francisco, according to later accounts.

An advertisement in a San Francisco paper features a show held from October 4 to 27 and is illustrated by a building with GRAND CIRCUS TEMPLE lettered on the front, formerly the Agricultural Hall, located on Stockton Street near Post. The text included this:

> The "Yankee" Robinson – Conklin – Samwell
> CONSOLIDATION!
>
> Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays, admission half price



THE "YANKEE" ROBINSON-CONKLIN-SAMWELL
CONSOLIDATION!

GRAND CIRCUS TEMPLE

(Formerly Horticultural Hall), Stockton street, near Post.

Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays .... Admission, Half-Price

HIS EVENING........OCTOBER 16, 1872

PROGRAMME.

Prussian Cavalcade (Original). ......
BY LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

The Two Comiques ....
MORESTE BROTHERS.

Horsemanship........
MASTER JOHNNIE.

CLOWN........PETE CONKLIN

Hindoostan Balancer ..
MR. ARMSTRONG

alking Pony, "Hunkadorl"
OWN . PETE CONKLIN

orizontal Bar ....
MORESTE BROTHERS

7–Horsemanship.
PROF. SAMWELLS

8–SANYEAH: .....

9–Horseman and Horsewomanship, Lover's Quarrels
SAMWELL and ELO

10–Modern Milo........
JOHN CONKLIN

11–Monkeys and Goat .....

13–Aerial Bars........
MORESTES BROTHERS

13–Horsewomanship–"Sacred Cloak".
SANYEAH

14–Clown Dog, and General Dog Review

Program for The "Yankee" Robinson – Conklin – Samwell Consolidation! Show in San Francisco, October 16, 1872. (State Historical Society of Wisconsin's Circus World Museum, Baraboo, Wisconsin)

> This Evening, October 16, Programme [acts in order of appearance, some repeating]:
>
> Prussian Cavalcade (Original) by Ladies and Gentlemen
> The Two Comiques, Moreste Brothers
> Horsemanship, Master Johnnie
> Clown, Pete Conklin
> Hindoostan Balancer, Mr. Armstrong
> Talking Pony, "Hunkadorl"
> Clown, Pete Conklin
> Horizontal Bar, Moreste Brothers
> Horsemanship, Prof. Samwells
> SANYEAH
> Horseman and Horsewomanship, Lover's Quarrels, Samwell & Co.
> Modern Milo, John Conklin
> Monkeys and Goat
> Aerial Bars, Morestes [*sic*] Brothers
> Horsewomanship, "Sacred Cloak," Sanyeah.
> Clown Dog and General Dog Review.

The preceding is a rather ho-hum entry in the annals of the American circus—being a small show in a downtown building, with no music mentioned, no exotic animals, a single clown, and a small troupe, the proceeds seemingly to be split among Messrs. Robinson, Conklin, and Samwell.[1]

On November 4, 1872, John Conklin wed Madame Sanyeah, whose story has been related earlier.

The operators of the "Consolidation" show claimed that they were buying ships and would be taking the circus on a world tour, but this never materialized, and Yankee Robinson remained in the Golden State, at least for a while.

In California (1873)

From February 10 to March 16, 1873, Wilson's Grand Amphitheatre & Parisian Circus, with proprietors John Wilson and Yankee Robinson, held forth in San Francisco on Sutter Street between Kearny and Montgomery streets.[2] At the time, Wilson was a grand figure in the California circus scene, but it is probable that Yankee Robinson was scarcely known to citizens of that state.

Apparently, Wilson and Robinson scrapped, but by April 21 it was reported locally that they had buried the hatchet, and the show would go on.[3] On May 23-24 the outfit was across the bay in Oakland at 13th and Broadway.

Featured performers in the Wilson-Robinson combination included: Belochistan Family, Oregon Giantess, Major Tiptoe (Irish dwarf), J. Kennebel (clown),[4] Dave Long (clown), Harry Long (clown), Frank Rivers (equestrian), Zoyara (equestrian),[5] Madame Dockrill (equestrienne), Master John Cook (juvenile rider), Mr. Shula (acrobat), Warner (clown), and Harry Causland (musical genius). A special act was "Harvest Home."

Activities of 1874

In 1874 Robinson worked as superintendent of the "Great Million Dollar Enterprise," otherwise known as "Buckley & Co.'s World's Race Festival!" Harry Buckley was the owner and manager, and O.P. Myers was general agent.[6] A show scheduled for Dixon, Illinois, May 15, 1874, offered a smorgasbord of acts including Soulier's Real Roman Hippodrome, Universal Fair, combined with Wolbold's Royal English Menagerie and Mammoth Balloon Ascension. The menagerie claimed to have 20 center poles. A company of 150 ladies and gentlemen constituted the company, which also included 100 "English thoroughbred race horses" (an unlikely possibility), a "drove of racing camels," "mammoth bands in magnificent chariots," and more—even "talking machines," whatever they were (the invention of the phonograph was still several years away).

Prizes paid in "greenbacks" and "silver cups" were awarded for the handsomest young lady, the prettiest baby, the best specimens of patch work, sack races, climbing greased poles, catching a greased pig, the best steam fire engine, and other things.

Under title of "Yankee Robinson in New Role—He Makes Buckley 'Stand Down the Hall,'" an account in the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, October 25, 1874, told of Harry Buckley's show appearance in Athens, Ohio, and noted in part:

> ...Buckley smiled as the crowds pressed to the front for tickets and never for a moment dreamed that Yankee Robinson was about to pour out his vial of wrath

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[1] Earlier in the following year, from January 13 to March 15, 1873, Conklin Bros. & Crystal Palace Circus & Professor Samwell's Wonderful Educated Animals had been a featured attraction at Woodward's Gardens, the most prominent pleasure park in San Francisco. For parts of summer 1873, certain members of the above troupe were affiliated in Oakland (June 17-18) and San Francisco (June 19 to July 16) with the Great New York & New Orleans Zoological & Equestrian Exhibition, W.W. Cole, manager. • Apparently referring to the Robinson-Conklin-Samwell combination, Change Reynolds, *Pioneer Circuses of the West* (Westernlore Press, Los Angeles, 1966), commented: "[John] Conklin's first California stand was heralded during the fall of 1872 by a huge billboard in San Francisco what was constructed especially for lithographs of this circus. It was 200 feet long and as tall as a house, according to reports. The title of the show at that time was Yankee Robinson-Conklin & Samwell's Circus."

[2] Certain information copied from San Francisco newspapers by Don B. Francis, circa 1955, and deposited with the Circus World Museum. • In autumn 1864 John Wilson's troupe, then known as the Grand Roman Hippodrome & Mammoth Circus, had attracted great attention in San Francisco, when he set up a show on Jackson Street and exhibited two camels—then curious beasts (although not unknown in the city, for in July 1860 a group of Bactrian camels had arrived on the schooner *Mary E. Foote* and were intended for use in the transport of goods over mountain and desert areas; the hoped-for profits did not materialize).

[3] Notes by Tom Parkinson preserved by the Circus World Museum.

[4] Stuart Thayer and William L. Slout, *Grand Entree: The Birth of the Greatest Show on Earth 1870-1875*, p. 134: "The Kennebels—Francois, Joseph, and Eugene, French clowns and pantomimists—came to America with Howes Great London Circus in 1864. Joseph was unique in that he performed without speaking, a comic device heretofore not used in the American arenas. The boys' sister was the famous equestrienne, Madame Dockrill."

[5] Zoyara, a.k.a. Ella Zoyara, was a male; a female impersonator.

[6] Stuart Thayer and William L. Slout, *Grand Entree: The Birth of the Greatest Show on Earth 1870-1875*, p. 123: "The former Barnum employee, Harry Buckley, was the titular proprietor. Buckley (1829-1884) was born to the circus parents, Matthew and Marienne, and was brother of Edward and Page. By the time he was 12 years of age he was an accomplished rider and violinist. He was connected with various circuses before managing the concert privileges with P.T. Barnum's 1872 and 1873 circuses." • From the preceding it may be concluded that Buckley learned under Barnum, watched his operation, then endeavored to copy it.

> which had been fermenting for the past thirty weeks, on the head of the inoffensive Harry, and all that was "gold and glitter" of the great Roman Hippodrome was soon to fall [into the hands of officers of the law].
>
> According to the peculiar laws of Ohio any vagrant can attach a show or other property passing through the State, if the owners thereof are non-residents. Yank's vast experience in these matters has given him the low cunning, and after making a corner on lawyers, and securing all of the legal talent in Athens, without tithe of security, pounced upon the Hippodrome, noble Romans and all, praying for a judgment of $8,500. This vast sum was the sum total of services, lacerated feelings, and damages done the concert of Frank Uffner, in which in some shape Yankee claimed to have an interest....

Apparently, Yankee Robinson had his own set of problems and shortfalls, as attachments had been "liberally served all summer for the indebtedness of that certain star and hero of Madame Sanyeah's successful engagements—the much-exploited Yankee Robinson. The curtain drops on act first of 'Stand Down the Hall,' and the show moves on."

Even without the antics of Robinson, Buckley was having major problems for having advertised:[1]

> Something Entirely New! Fac-simile under canvas of Barnum's Great Hippodrome, under the management of H. Buckley & Co.'s World Race Festival, Wambold's Royal English Menagerie, Soulier's Real Roman Hippodrome. Will open in Chicago for one week, commencing Monday, July 6, on Lade Park....

The long-established showman P.T. Barnum reacted as might be expected and placed advertisements against this imposture, stating (in part):

> SCOUNDRELISM: I am informed that parties are using my name in the West, advertising their shows as "reproductions of P.T. Barnum's Roman Hippodrome."

Old Yankee Robinson's Great Modern Show (1875)

It seems that 1875 was intended to be a year of promise. Tabloid-size multiple-page couriers titled *1845-1875, Old "Yankee" Robinson's Daily Advertising Medium for 1875* were made up by the Express Printing Company of Rochester, New York. Yankee Robinson was editor, the masthead proclaimed, and A.S. Burt served as general agent. "Circulation 1,000,000" a headline boasted, probably without justification. Such couriers were intended to be distributed in advance of an appearance, to newspaper editors and to the public, to stir up interest.

After stating on the front page that "I might pretend to have a show...with 15,000 animals, 1,000 men and horses," etc., he went on to say, "A man is a fool for telling a lie when the truth will serve his purpose, and pay far better."[2] Thereupon he boldly stated—shall we say in exaggeration rather than a lie?:

> But I will tell you what I have got, and I am going to ask you to come and see it, viz: A Brand New Show FOUR Times Larger than any I ever had.

The 1875 show offered a circus, wild animal show, "genuine Roman Hippodrome (race track 34 feet wide, 9 times around one mile...," and, the grand highlight:

> A Large Elevated Stage near the center of my great pavilion and inside of the Hippodrome race track.... Upon this stage I shall introduce a score or more of the most accomplished male and female *Parlor Roller Skatists* in the county(the Champion Skatatorial Troupe of the World.

Also slated to appear was "a grand Velocipedian Carnival Troupe," in other words, a group of cyclists. Dancers and a man shot from a cannon (the "Great Sepoy Cannon Feat," which by clever negotiation he had snatched from under the nose of P.T. Barnum) completed the bill. In conclusion on the front page, Robinson stated, "I propose to be present at each exhibition, and either take an active part or 'STAND DOWN THE HALL!'"

On a later page: "With an establishment so large as mine, it is next to impossible to travel throughout the country by any other mode of conveyance than that offered by railroads." It took two large trains to accommodate his needs, he went on to boast.

His son, Silas F. Robinson, was billed as "the distinguished lecturer and curator" in charge of 10 cages of animals. All told the 1875 company at the outset of the season had these features and key personnel:

> Silas F. Robinson, lecturer and curator of animals
> Ring Horses, 21
> Race Horses, 17
> Entree Horses, 38
> Trick Horses, 7
> Dancing Horses, 12
> Ponies and Mules, 12
> One tent accommodating 10,000 people
> Wagons of numerous colors
> Railroad cars: Two trains, one Private Palace Car, and a Pullman Coach
> Number of men employed ahead, 18

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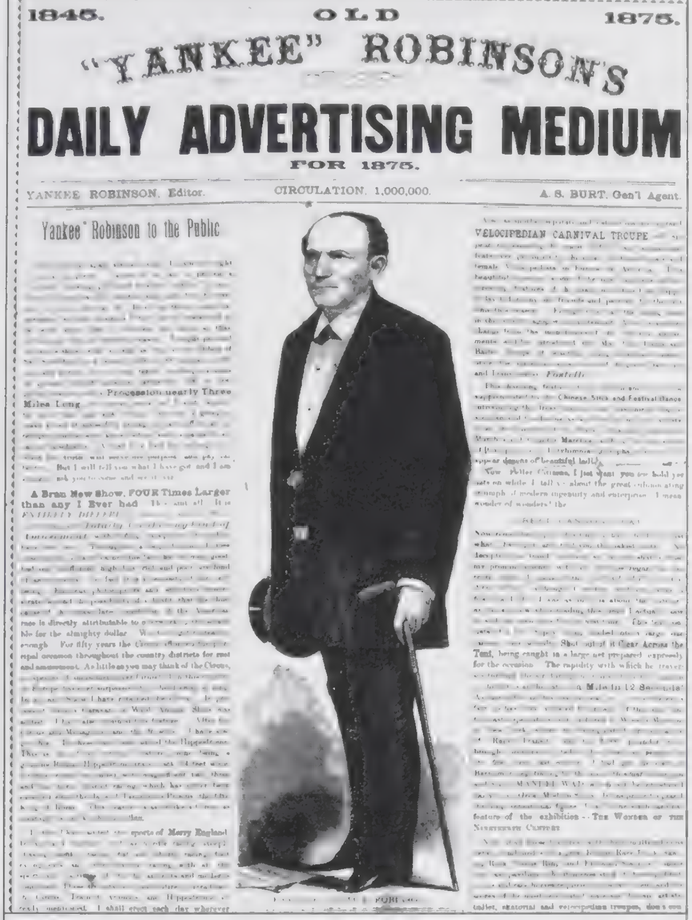
[1] Stuart Thayer and William L. Slout, *Grand Entree: The Birth of the Greatest Show on Earth 1870-1875*, pp. 123-126 reproduces a Buckley advertisement and Barnum's response, includes information about the 1874 Buckley show, and concludes it was mostly a sham with little substance.

[2] The front page was dominated by a full-length depiction of the showman, captioned Fayette Lodwick [*sic*] Robinson.



1845. OLD 1875.

"YANKEE" ROBINSON'S

DAILY ADVERTISING MEDIUM

FOR 1875.

YANKEE ROBINSON, Editor. CIRCULATION, 1,000,000. A. S. BURT, Gen'l Agent.

Yankee" Robinson to the Public

VELOCIPEDIAN CARNIVAL TROUPE

Front cover of *Old "Yankee" Robinson's Daily Advertising Medium for 1875* ballyhoo sheet, that claimed to have a circulation of a million copies. (State Historical Society of Wisconsin's Circus World Museum, Baraboo, Wisconsin)

Queen of Velocipedians, Flora Warner

Queen of Skatatorial Troupe, Estella Johnstone

Queen of the May Day Festivals, Captain of the Black Crookers, Miss Iri Poni

Wrestlers, Miss Belt and Brookes

Boxers: Felix, Proud, Samson, and Sweet

Walkists, Miss Lelia and Mr. Cretan

Foot Race against a thoroughbred, James Charles

Iron-jawed lady, Signora Mandania

U.S. Detective, Jim Russell

Overseer of the Gale "candescent" lights, William Hewitt

Three Bands: Brass, Automaton, and Steam

For Tableau Cars, two of which were imported

The Largest Wagon ever made 44 feet long

The procession represents the assembling of the four quarters of the world to the "Centennial."

Total of men, women and children: About 400. Horses, 218. Mules, 3. Jacks, 4.

"Old Yankee" himself will be on hand. "Stand Down the Hall."

Two performances daily, afternoon and evening.

Admission to all, only 50 Cents, Children 25 cents.

On another page he stated that his new show had been organized on April 24, 1875, and that equipment was still arriving, including four carloads from New York, one bearing the famous Polyhymnia. Also on the way were "Mr. J. Showles' thoroughbred stock from Long Branch, N.J."

Circus historian Stuart Thayer has written that the show was formed at the farm of Daniel Scott at Scott's Morristown, Minnesota farm, via an arrangement called Scott & Co., representing an investment of about $30,000, mostly supplied by Scott.[1] Further from Thayer:

> Some of the material came from the Montgomery Queen Circus, which had left much of its overland show in Mankato, Minnesota, when it went to the West Coast by rail in 1874. A circular wooden training barn was constructed on Scott's farm, and Joe Tinkham undertook the training of the ring stock.
>
> Yankee Robinson went to Rochester, New York to arrange for printing, then on to New York City to hire performers. There were 25 wagons, and 75 baggage stock....
>
> By April 1, 150 workmen had gathered, and the show was transported on 20 cars to Centralia, Illinois, where it opened the season on April 24.... Scott had borrowed $2,000 from a Major H.W. Dike of Faribault to get the circus on the road.... Dike was hired at $100 a month to be assistant business manager....

On May 7, 1875, the Vincennes, Indiana *Sun* anticipated the show's coming to town:

> **Yankee Robinson's Great Show**
>
> By reference to our advertising columns it will be seen that on Tuesday, May 11th, old Yankee Robinson will exhibit his "boss show" in this place. The show is four times larger than any Robinson ever managed, and has six cardinal features....
>
> One pleasing thing about this circus is that they have reserved seats, nicely upholstered and easy as a sofa. Of course there will be a big crowd in attendance at this grand performance, and we are glad of it, as we are satisfied that it is worthy of patronage. Come one and all and see the "boss show" of America.

In its issue of May 14th *The Sun* told what happened:

> **The Circus**
>
> To say that Yankee Robinson's show played in this place under unfavorable circumstances would hardly express the truth. They labored under disadvantages, such as weather, season, and the like.
>
> However, that was not the only difficulty. Yankee Robinson in some respects has a good show, while in others he has a deuced bad one. The bareback riding

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[1] "Sinking in St. Paul: Yankee Robinson's Great Modern Show, 1875," *Bandwagon*, September-October 1999.

> of Master Willie Showles, we have never seen excelled by a boy of his age, and the performance of the Romelli family was good.
>
> While the show had a few good features, it had many bad ones. A man in trying to ride a horse fell off seven times and the horse fell down once. That is decidedly bad for a first-class circus.
>
> The velocipedes, skating, &c., were imperfectly done, and the trick of shooting a man from a cannon was very gauzy.
>
> Owing to the high wind and the rain they were compelled to show at Green's Hall in the evening, where they gave a variety entertainment that was very superior to the one given in the afternoon. Taken as a whole, most people pronounced the show a fraud, and we, although not exactly agreeing with them, are inclined to that belief ourselves.

An advertisement for an engagement in Mendota, Wisconsin, on Saturday, May 22, 1875, followed by a stand in Dixon, Illinois on May 24, included essentially the features advertised in his give-away courier, plus "The Mighty Cotton Show House," not further described.

Reviews were mixed in ensuing weeks, but it was obvious that the show did not live up to its expectations. In New Lisbon, Wisconsin, the *Juneau County Argus* ran this review on June 26:

> Yankee Robinson's Circus Company had two exhibitions here last Friday, both of which were attended by large audiences. Some thought the show an excellent one, others say it was only so-so, while those of the visitors who interviewed the three-card monte men swear it was a humbug and a swindle.[1]
>
> We have no doubt that the part of it which they patronized was fully as bad as they describe it. It is said that experience keeps a dear school, but a certain kind of people will learn in no other. We infer from the numerous groans and growls we hear among the show-goers that there was quite a large class of the kind of people referred to, who took a pretty dear lesson in the school of experience at Yankee Robinson's Circus last Friday.
>
> It would be a rich entertainment if the fool-killer should come around with one of these shows some time and get into the three-card monte tent. What a slaughter of "innocents" there would be.

It was soon announced that the show would be in St. Paul on Monday, June 28, "under a canvas three times larger than any ever known in Minnesota. Disregarding what P.T. Barnum might have had to say, he declared forthrightly: "In fact, Old Yankee has the Only Genuine Hippodrome! And roman Chariot Racing!." To be sure, Barnum's exact "Roman Hippodrome" title was not used.

It seemed that in 1875 Robinson got a dose of the same medicine he had dished out to Harry Buckley the year before. A newspaper account told what happened:[2]

> "Yankee" Robinson's Circus, after giving two performances at St. Paul, Minn., on June 28, was, upon attachments granted certain creditors, seized by the officers of the law and is in their possession at present, remarks our correspondent under date of June 30, continuing:
>
> "The show is tied up here and is practically a thing of the past. It will be remembered that the show was organized at Morristown, in this state, last winter, the proprietors being Dan Scott, Esq., and 'Yankee' (F.L.) Robinson. The organization was as follows: 'Yankee' Robinson, director; Dan Scott, business manager; A.S. Burt, general agent; R.S. McAudles, treasurer; Dan Rhodes, railroad contractor; Jacob Showles, equestrian director; Major W.H. Dike of Faribault being subsequently taken in as an assistant business manager.
>
> "The show was organized last December, and on April 20, following was shipped from Faribault to Centralia, Ill., from which point arrangements had been made to commence the season. With the exception of a few towns, the show has played to losing business since the season commenced; and their troubles culminated at this point on the 28th, with the result already mentioned.
>
> "After it became known that one or two attachments had been issued against the show, the performers and employees struck *en masse* for their just dues, and for a time it seemed as if a riot were imminent, but the authorities succeeded in quieting the men. A great many causes for the failure are assigned, but the principal amount seems to rest on Major Dike, who claims that he loaned a considerable sum of money to Dan Scott, who died at his home in Morristown yesterday morning; he also claims that he advanced money to start and run the show, being secured by a chattel mortgage on the property.
>
> "It is claimed that Major Dike has run the show in his own interest, and that he directed the concern into this city for the express purpose of forcing it into liquidation. This, however, must be taken *cum grano salis* as the show has been a loser from the start.
>
> "Mr. Robinson himself is very reticent on the subject and is satisfied to have the law take its course. The receipts during the afternoon and evening performances here footed in the neighborhood of $1,200, none of which has been paid to employees...."

It was further related that the employees, about 100 in number, demanded "bread or blood," and that they were fed by a wagon of provisions supplied by the city. Major W.F. Dike (or Dyke), it was reported, had stopped at the Merchants' Hotel and was in danger for his life, "and through strategy only, escaped unharmed."

---

[1] It was common to set up three-card monte, chuck-a-luck, poker games, and other gambling enterprises in one or more small tents away from the main show. These were not advertised and were probably conducted by outsiders, with Robinson getting a percentage of the "take."

[2] Unattributed clippings preserved by the Circus World Museum.

Later, another attachment was slapped on the show for $7,213.75 by the Rochester Printing Company, "for show printing done." The situation soon escalated into further drama:

> Shortly after a grand *coup d'etat* took place, which has created no little excitement. The last attachment covered all the remaining property. In this property were included 22 horses. All at once, 22 horses, each with a rider, emerged from the stables, and under whip and spur, headed for the Dakota County line some four miles distant. So sudden and unexpected was the movement that all escaped. The procession of fleeing horsemen was a sight not often exceeded in ludicrous aspects. All in all it was a procession not exceeded in ridiculous surroundings except by the famous command of Shakespeare's Falstaff....

After the dust had settled, sort of, Silas F. Robinson, Yankee's son, sent a statement to the *St. Paul Dispatch*, which was printed on July 7. He stated that his father and Dan Scott had been in business years earlier and both had prospered, as evidenced by the grandness of the late Scott's estate. In 1875 Scott had become very ill and exhausted, due in part because the show was thinly financed and could not sustain itself. He could not continue, and went home, leaving an engagement in Charles City. Although Scott and Robinson ran the show and had much talent, Dike did not tend to the finances properly, sometimes took ticket money for himself, and was habitually drunk.

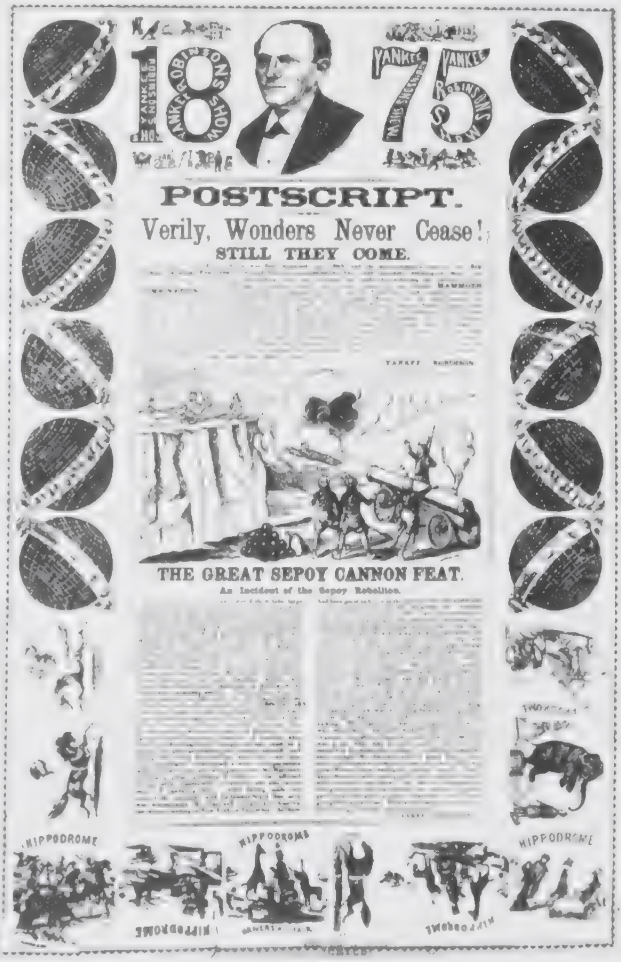
Yankee Robinson added his own version of what had happened to Scott and the show, stating that Mr. Dike, the devil personified, and his associates had conspired against Robinson and Scott, and that when "they found he could not rule, they determined to ruin."[1] In due course, "They caused the wreck of an institution, which leaves me to shoulder the blame and causes me again to paddle my own canoe in the wide, wide world of human experience."

As Robinson and Scott realized that under Major Dike there was no future, they laid their own plans:

> When Mr. Scott came home from Decorah [Iowa; a stop on the early 1875 circus route] he requested me to come and see him. I did so. He told me that he could not live but a short time (of which I was well satisfied), and asked what course we had better pursue.
>
> I told him that as it took an army of men to run the modern show, and that as I had to be ahead all the time, I thought the best plan would be to run the show as it was around Faribault, showing there the 5th of July, as arrangements up to that time had been fully completed, and then disband, reorganize a smaller and a wagon show and finish the season.
>
> This met his full approbation, and I left him, and issued orders accordingly, but like the fate of those in the Garden of Eden, a serpent [Dike] was there, which crawling in the press [issuing statements to newspapers], put forth its venom and poisoned all, even disregarding the dying requests of Mr. Scott, who had fostered and fed this reptile, only to have it turn and sting him.

Another view of the rascally Major Dike was given by *The True Republican*, Hudson, Wisconsin, reprinted from the *Pioneer-Press*. The account begins with a reprinting of an earlier story:

> "Yankee Robinson's show exhibited last night to an immense audience, at least 3,000 persons being present. The performances were rather satisfactory than otherwise, and the several novelties advertised were at least partially presented—though there seemed to be a want of spirit, a lack of proper man-



1875

POSTSCRIPT.

Verily, Wonders Never Cease!

STILL THEY COME.

THE GREAT SEPOY CANNON FEAT.

An Incident of the Sepoy Rebellion.

Trade advertisement by Yankee Robinson, season of 1875, toward the twilight of his circus career. By this time he was a legend in the business. (State Historical Society of Wisconsin's Circus World Museum, Baraboo, Wisconsin)

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[1] *Saint Paul Dispatch*, July 7, 1875. Statement by Yankee Robinson sent to the newspaper by his son, Silas F. Robinson.

> agement, and an air of lassitude and general demoralization caused, it is supposed, by the report that the leading proprietor of the establishment, Mr. Dan Scott, who has been dangerously sick for some time, had died in the afternoon at his home in Morristown.
>
> "It subsequently transpired that the death of this estimable gentleman would greatly embarrass the show, the affairs of which are already sufficiently complicated. Mr. Robinson himself is a most thorough and popular gentleman, and one of the most accomplished showmen in America, and for his same it is to be hoped any troubles which arise may be of short duration and entirely overcome."
>
> Since the above was written, it transpires that the demoralization of Yankee Robinson's show has culminated in a general strike.... It is alleged that Major Dike is at the bottom of the trouble; that as treasurer he has had plenty of money to meet pressing obligations, but having a claim of his own, he hobbled all the available funds for the express purpose of bringing on the very crises which now prevail in Yankee Robinson's affairs. He instigated the strike of the canvas men himself....

So ended the 1875 circus experience of Yankee Robinson, seemingly a combination of a lacklustre show troupe, crippling lack of funds, and the machinations of the wily Major Dike.

Later Years

After this time, Yankee Robinson traveled here and there, but never achieved the success of former days. In 1877 he was on stage in the winter season in dramatic plays and comedies, as he had done in every one of the past 15 years, except one.

In 1878 his travels included a stand at the Quincy (Illinois) Opera House, where on December 28 he produced *Asa Dennison,* with Robinson taking the role of a comedian "with great success." [1]

In 1879 he traveled with a tent show featuring *Uncle Tom's Cabin.* In the following year, among his performances was the star role in a play written by his wife, called *F.F.V.s.*[2] From January 17 to 23, 1881, Yankee Robinson was in Cincinnati on stage at the Coliseum in *F.F.V.s,* which seems to have become popular.[3]

A reminiscence of Robinson published in 1884 included this:[4]

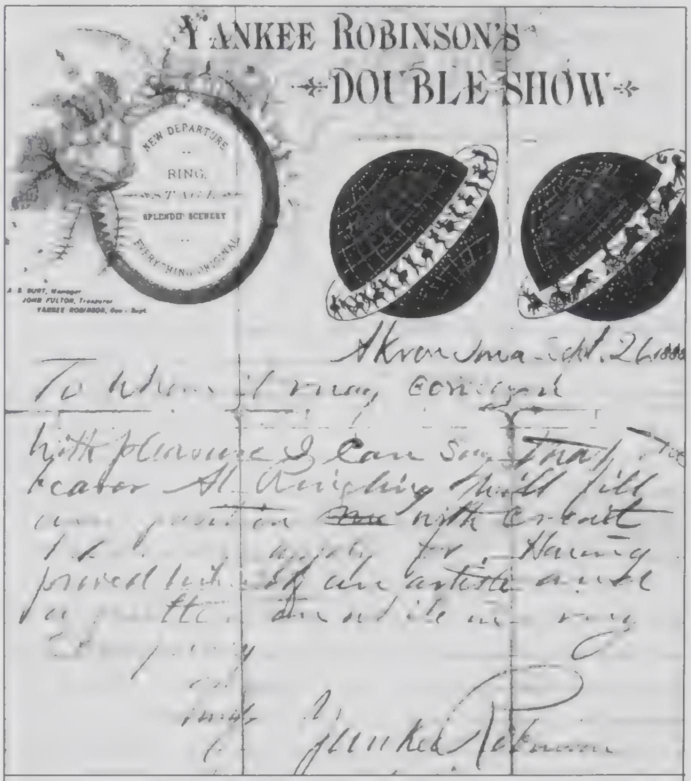
> Robinson was a man of unbounded extravagance. He presented his family physician right here in Chicago with a $500 diamond ring, when I knew that he had just bought a horse for $3,000 in St. Paul, paying down $500 and still owing $2,500.
>
> You remember a play he used to have, *Stand Down the Hall.* A sort of Yankee play it was....

With the Ringlings (1883-1884)

In April 1883, Yankee Robinson, from an address in Moberly, Missouri, advertised that he was organizing a show with his own cars and sleepers, and sought to sign people to participate.[5]

On September 26, 1883, Yankee Robinson, on letterhead bearing the printed 1883 date and the heading, "Yankee Robinson's Double Show" (ballet troupe and hippodrome), wrote this endorsement for not-yet-famous Al Ringling:[6]

> Akron, Iowa—Sept. 26, 1883
>
> To whom it may concern
>
> With pleasure I can say that the bearer Al Ringling will fill any position with credit he may apply for hav-



YANKEE ROBINSON'S
DOUBLE SHOW

A. S. BURT, Manager
JOHN FULTON, Treasurer
YANKEE ROBINSON, Gen. Supt.

Akron Iowa Sept. 26 1883

To whom it may concern

Yankee Robinson gives a character reference for Al Ringling in 1883, recognizing his potential, but never dreaming that the Ringling name would become world famous. (State Historical Society of Wisconsin's Circus World Museum, Baraboo, Wisconsin)

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[1] Newspaper account cited by Carl Landrum, in "'Yankee' Robinson, Tent Showman," in the *Quincy Herald-Whig,* July 21, 1991.

[2] F.F.V. was a familiar and widely-used abbreviation for the First Families of Virginia; *i.e.,* the aristocracy of the state.

[3] Russell James Grandstaff, *A History of the Professional Theatre in Cincinnati, 1861-1888.* Ph.D. dissertation for the University of Michigan, 1963. Mentions schedule (no comment on popularity).

[4] Interview with J.L. Hutchinson, September 9, 1884, in the *Chicago Tribune.* Hutchinson had known Robinson since at least circa 1868.

[5] Notes by Tom Parkinson preserved by the Circus World Museum, citing an 1883 advertisement reproduced in *Show World.*

[6] Document preserved by the Circus World Museum.

> ing proved himself an artiste and a gentleman while in my company.
>
> Truly
> Yankee Robinson
> "Double Show"

Later in 1883 he met again with Ringling, based in Baraboo, Wisconsin, and the two figured that with the Ringling family's capital and personnel in combination with the fame of Yankee Robinson's name, the Ringling circus would be a success.

The Final Curtain (1884)

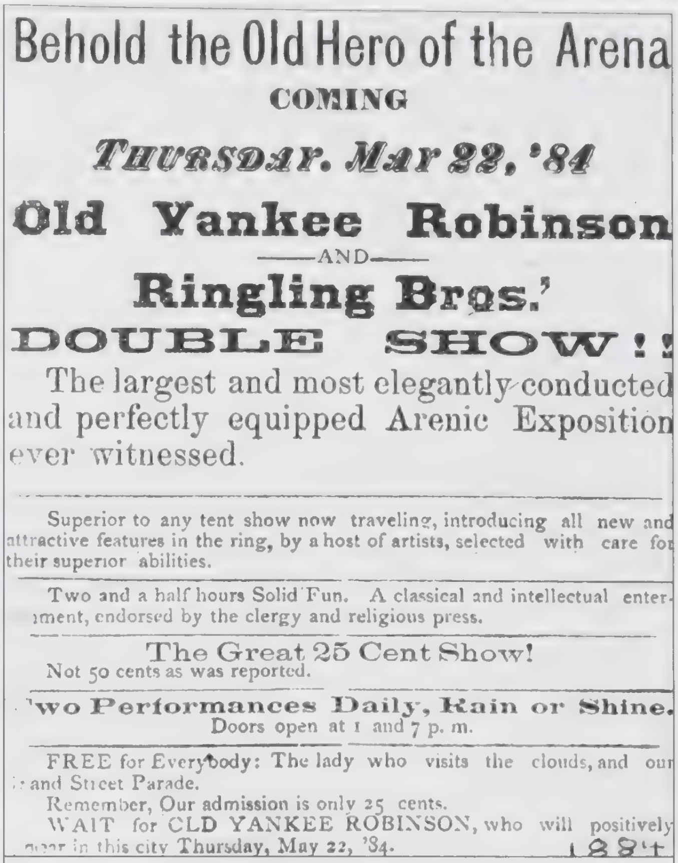
On May 19, 1884, the Yankee Robinson & Ringling Bros. Great Double Shows, Circus and Caravan went on tour.[1]

At a typical appearance, Robinson would address the audience:[2]

> Ladies and gentlemen, I am an old, old man. For 40 years I have rested my head on a stranger's pillow. I have traveled in every state in the Union, and have been associated with every showman of prominence in America. I will soon pass to the arena of life that knows no ending; and when I do, I want to die in harness and connected with these boys.
>
> If I could have a dying wish granted, it would be that my name should remain associated with that of the Ringling Brothers; for I tell you the Ringling Brothers are the future showmen of America; they are the coming men....

A circus bill of 1884 reflects the features of the new combination:

> The Coming Events Cast Their Shadows
> Coming, Tuesday, May 27, 1884;
> OLD YANKEE ROBINSON
> And
> RINGLING BROS.'
> DOUBLE SHOW!
>
> The largest and most elegantly conducted and perfectly equipped Arenic exposition ever witnessed. Every artist a star.
>
> Superior to any tent show now traveling, introducing all new and attractive features in the ring, by a host of artists selected with care for their superior abilities and personal worth.
>
> Two hours and a half of solid fun; a colossal and intellectual entertainment, endorsed by the clergy and religious press.
>
> THE GREAT 25 CT. SHOW!
> Not 50 cents as reported, but only 25 cents
>
> Two Performances Daily, Rain or Shine. Doors open at 1 and 7 p.m. Fun commences one hour later. FREE for everybody! The lady who visits the clouds and our grand street parade.
>
> Remember this GREAT DOUBLE SHOW will appear as follows:
>
> Albany, May 26; Brodhead, May 27; Monroe, May 28.



Behold the Old Hero of the Arena
COMING
Thursday, May 22, '84
Old Yankee Robinson
—AND—
Ringling Bros.'
DOUBLE SHOW!!
The largest and most elegantly conducted and perfectly equipped Arenic Exposition ever witnessed.

Superior to any tent show now traveling, introducing all new and attractive features in the ring, by a host of artists, selected with care fo their superior abilities.

Two and a half hours Solid Fun. A classical and intellectual entertainment, endorsed by the clergy and religious press.

The Great 25 Cent Show!
Not 50 cents as was reported.

wo Performances Daily, Rain or Shine.
Doors open at 1 and 7 p. m.

FREE for Everybody: The lady who visits the clouds, and ou and Street Parade.
Remember, Our admission is only 25 cents.
WAIT for OLD YANKEE ROBINSON, who will positively in this city Thursday, May 22, '84.
1884

The "Old Hero of the Arena," Yankee Robinson, teams with the up-and-coming Ringling Brothers in 1884. (State Historical Society of Wisconsin's Circus World Museum, Baraboo, Wisconsin)

A long time afterward, Louis E. Cooke, a writer for *Show World* would recount this:[3]

> Old Yankee Robinson was widely known when I first became interested in sawdust circles, and afterwards became one of my best personal friends. I know of no one who could tell more interesting stories of early show life in America. He was a rather eccentric individual, possessing an abundance of knowledge and full of brilliant ideas, which made him a most companionable fellow as well as a valuable instructor. I have often listened to his talks of adventure, as well as the rise and fall of all sorts of circus enterprises, as

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[1] John and Alice Durant, *Pictorial History of the American Circus*, Cranbury, NJ: A.S. Barnes & Co., 1957, p. 319. Illustration of 1884 wagon is on p. 148. • Tom Ogden, *200 Years of the American Circus*, published by Facts on File.

[2] C.G. Sturtevant, "Yankee Robinson," *The White Tops*, September 1928.

[3] "Some Circus Men I Have Met," published on December 21, 1907. (Here adapted.)

> he often put it, "from the time that Noah set sail with his menagerie down to the days of Dan Rice."
>
> During the last years of Mr. Robinson's life he became associated with the Messrs. Ringling Brothers…and the writer distinctly remembers a prediction personally made at that time to the effect that "those boys are darned bright fellows and they are bound to make great showmen. Now, you mark my word."

On August 27, 1884, the Double Show was at Bayard, Iowa, having been on the road for more than three months.[1] Years later, circa 1914, Al Ringling remembered the time:

> Yankee had not been feeling well for about two weeks. We boys tried to prevail upon him to take some time away from the circus and rest up, but with his burning desire to die with his boots on, he just would not hear to it.
>
> On the last day, at Bayard, Iowa, he seemed much weaker and had a hard time going through his part of the performance. I did persuade him to go on the train rather than ride the wagons across the country to Lake City, a distance of forty miles. I accompanied him to the railroad station and put him on the train, and that was the last time I ever saw Yankee Robinson.
>
> Some days passed and as he did not catch up with the circus, we became uneasy and began to trace him. We learned that a very sick man was removed from the train at Jefferson. I then came to Jefferson, to learn that the funeral was held the day before.

Upon arriving in Jefferson, the very ill Yankee Robinson, who did not disclose his identity, had been taken to the Charles Dean Hotel. The proprietor of the hotel, Dean, learned that Robinson was a Mason, and soon members of the Morning Star Lodge No. 159 A.F. and A.M., called upon him to offer comfort and solace.

A later recollection of the situation included this scenario:[2]

> Two men, Ed Troxell and Johnnie Marks, recall the day when the old circus man, his once tall, broad frame stooped with ill health, his thick curly hair and beard streaked with gray, descended from a train at the Chicago & Northwestern station at Jefferson.
>
> Even though an extremely sick man, he squared his shoulders under the black frock coat he always wore and asked Henry Hogan, then driving the Jefferson bus, to transfer him to the Wabash station. But Yankee Robinson never reached his destination for the will that carried him through more failures than it is a lot of a dozen men to withstand, failed him at last. He collapsed in the bus and was taken to the Head [*sic*] house….
>
> As he was penniless the Masonic lodge at Jefferson cared for him. For a time he concealed his identity, but when it became apparent that he could not live, the old trouper gave his name and asked that his daughter, a Mrs. Bulla, then living in South Bend, Indiana, be called to Jefferson. He died shortly after she reached his bedside….

On September 4, 1884, Robinson died of Bright's disease at 3:14 p.m. in Jefferson, Iowa, following an illness of three or four days, thus ending his final season (which was scheduled to close on October 8). His son Silas subsequently informed friends and the media including *The New York Clipper*.

After his passing, the Masons conducted his funeral and dug his grave on the Masonic lot in the Jefferson Cemetery. Six years later, through the generosity of Ringling Brothers, Sells Brothers, and other circus companies, a tall monument was erected on his grave, a modified obelisk with an urn at the top. Inscriptions and designs included the name FAYETTE L. / ROBINSON and, above, a large Masonic emblem.

The *New York Clipper*, October 4, 1884, included biographical notes and mentioned that Silas Robinson, born of Yankee's second marriage, "was the editor of the Warsaw (Illinois) *Democrat* in 1880, but was forced back into the show business and is now with the Jennie Bomen company on tour in the West."

Robinson's name lived on in circus glory and was seen on several other shows and attractions, including Fred Buchanan's Yankee Robinson Circus 1905-1920 and, later, as a subtitle on the name of the Gollmar Bros. Circus.[3]

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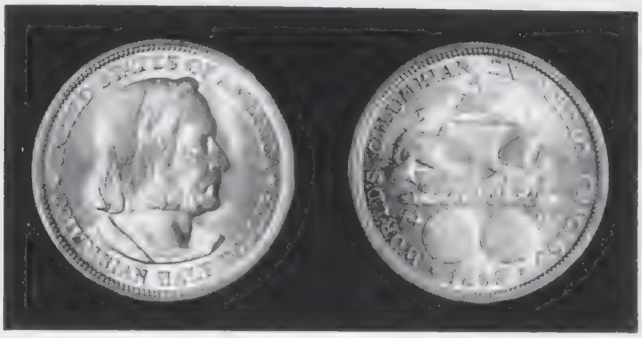
[1] Bayard note and subsequent quotation from Al Ringling are from Dr. Samuel G. Barker, "I Knew Yankee Robinson," in *The Royal Arch Mason*, Vol. V, No. 11, September 1957. Barker, who became a dentist, had attended the Robinson-Ringling show at the age of nine, in 1884, and "some thirty years later, I got the story of Yankee Robinson's last days with the circus from the lips of my boyhood friend and idol, Al Ringling, as we sat visiting on the circus lot of the Sells Forepaugh Circus the day they were showing in Jefferson, Iowa (Ringlings had recently bought this circus). Al's story is as follows…." The funeral arrangements are from a minute book kept by the Masons and were described by Barker. Otherwise the lengthy Barker account recites general information, some factual and some not, from uncredited sources, probably mostly derived from correspondence in 1956 with Maitland, Florida circus historian George L. Chindahl (letters preserved by the CWM).

[2] G.W. Churchill, article in the *Des Moines* (Iowa) *Sunday Register*, November 6, 1927, quoting recent comments from two old-timers who in 1927 were "still living in Jefferson." Certain of this information relative to 1884, except the old-timers' recollections, seems to have been adapted from an earlier source; similar information appeared in *The Masonic Chronicle*, February 1890, p. 55 (copy furnished to the present author, QDB, by CWM, from the Livingston Masonic Library, New York City).

[3] Tom Ogden, *200 Years of the American Circus*, published by Facts on File. • John and Alice Durant, *Pictorial History of the American Circus*, Cranbury, NJ: A.S. Barnes & Co., 1957, p. 319.

ADVENTURE NO. 28

THE STORY OF THE 1892 COLUMBIAN HALF DOLLAR



Minted in 1892, the World's Columbian Exposition half dollar was America's first commemorative coin of this denomination. The Exposition, scheduled to open in 1892 to observe the 400th anniversary of Columbus' arrival in America, threw open its gates a year late. Additional half dollars were minted with the date 1893.

* * *

The Greatest American Exposition

In 1890 plans were made for America to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Columbus' landing in the New World by holding an exposition in 1892. The 1876 Centennial Exhibition, held in Philadelphia, had been a grand success and now it was intended to create an even more impressive event.[1]

In Chicago an undeveloped 686-acre site on the shore of Lake Michigan was selected for the Exposition grounds. In January 1891 a group of architects met in the city to plan the buildings, which were subsequently constructed mainly in the classical style reflecting Greek and Roman influences, and with exteriors made of an artificial composition resembling marble, giving rise to the name "White City" for the structures.

The Exposition was dedicated on October 21, 1892, but as all exhibits were not yet in place, and cold weather was setting in, it was not possible to open the fair to the general public in the 400th anniversary year. Finally, at noon on May 1, 1893, President Grover Cleveland officiated at a ceremony that opened the Exposition grounds to the public. Strains of the *Hallelujah Chorus* greeted the estimated 300,000 individuals who had come to attend the opening day festivities.

The Exposition was intended to showcase American progress in art, architecture, technology, science, agriculture, and other endeavors. No expense was spared to create a virtual city, complete with 160 buildings (many of which were connected by canals plied by gondolas and small steam-powered craft) and 65,000 exhibits devoted to commercial, national, artistic, and other subjects. Separate structures showcased the attractions and products of different states and a number of foreign countries. Sculptures and other works of art decorated many of the open spaces as well as building interiors. Ultimately the event cost an estimated $30 million to stage and attracted 28 million visitors. Attending the Exposition was the aim of citi-

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[1] Adapted and condensed from the expanded account in the writer's *Commemorative Coins of the United States: A Complete Encyclopedia.*

Opening day of the World's Columbian Exposition, May 1, 1893, Chicago, with President Grover Cleveland the featured guest. As can be seen, wearing a hat was *de rigueur* with the public at the time. The Exposition, planned to open to the public in 1892, fell behind schedule and was not ready until the 401st anniversary of Columbus' "discovery" of America. (*Shepp's World's Fair Photographed,* 1893)

zens all across America, and to oblige them the various railroads ran special cars and excursions to Chicago. Many individuals made hometown newspaper headlines by walking or bicycling to the Exposition from distant locations.

Numismatics at the Exposition

The World's Columbian Exposition offered many treats for numismatists. The United States Mint exhibit in the Government Building featured a coining press that struck thousands of brass souvenir medals, which were offered for sale at 25¢ each. Coins from the Mint Collection, taken to Chicago from their home in Philadelphia, were on view and were highlighted by the rare 1804 silver dollar and the unique 1849 $20 gold piece in company with coins from all eras of civilized history. The Mint's pet eagle, "Peter," in stuffed magnificence oversaw the display from a position high above the cases. It is said that Peter once posed for the 1836 Gobrecht silver dollar, but was later killed when he tried to perch on a revolving flywheel.[1]

In addition, there were many private exhibits and vendors. For souvenir hunters literally hundreds of different inexpensive tokens, badges, and medals struck in brass, aluminum, white metal, and bronze were available. The Scott Stamp & Coin Company, a leading firm of the era, had two separate sales areas at the fair.

These were heady times in the rare coin hobby and for collecting interests in general, and there was a lot of enthusiasm in the air.

The Commemorative Half Dollars

The idea for a fifty-cent piece to commemorate the event was suggested by the manager of the Exposition, who first proposed that the staggering quantity of 40,000,000 pieces be coined, these to serve a variety of purposes including admission to the grounds. Later the requested quantity was reduced, and it was decided to sell the coins for $1 each in order to raise money to help defray Exposition expenses.

On August 5, 1892, Congress approved legislation providing for half dollars of standard weight and fineness, not to exceed a quantity of 5,000,000 to be known as Columbian half dollars. Appropriate designs were to be chosen by the Treasury Department, and metal was to be from obsolete silver coins already in government storage.

In 1892 and 1893 the "souvenir coins," as they were called, attracted much attention in newspaper columns across America. The portrait of Columbus to be used on the obverse caused considerable controversy, as seemingly no one could agree on what the famous explorer looked like. The confusion prevailing at the time is reflected by a typical newspaper article:[2]

> The authorities have decided that the Columbus whose features are to appear on the souvenir half dollar shall be the one portrayed in the recently-discovered picture which is believed to be by Lorenzo Lotto, a painter whose name is not a very familiar one, but whose portrait work is hardly second to that of Titian. While it is not proved that this picture is the countenance of Columbus, it is asserted that more can be said for it in support of its genuineness than any one of the other 30 alleged portraits....
>
> "The belief in the authenticity of the picture rests rather on what the picture shows than on the imperfect records of its successive ownerships. The person who appears on the canvas answers to the description of the Admiral. The face is of the Genoese type, the lines are those formed by exposure to the weather, and the bronzed, tanned look of the skin is the result of salt air and southern suns. The dress is the Italian cos-

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[1] Today Peter is on exhibit at the Philadelphia Mint.

[2] From a clipping preserved in a scrapbook in the possession of the author. Included are notices relating to the Exposition, assembled circa 1892-3 by an unknown person. None of the clippings are attributed and only a few are dated.

> tume of the Columbus age, which appears in no other portrait of the Discoverer.... Absolute certainty is admittedly impossible. Therefore, if the best judgment of experts is that the Lotto portrait has the most chances of genuineness in its favor, it ought to be adopted. This much is certain, that whatever likeness of Columbus is put on five million souvenir half dollars, which will be distributed over all parts of the United States, will become the popular conception of the appearance of the man and will remain so to the end of time.

Amid controversy, the decision was left to chief engraver of the Mint, Charles E. Barber, to select a suitable portrait. He decided upon a design modeled in plaster by Olin Levi Warner, based on a fanciful portrait in Madrid. The reverse was also from a Warner plaster model and depicted a replica of Columbus' flagship, the *Santa Maria*, produced in Spain in honor of the 400th anniversary. Two globes below the ship represent the Old World and the New and are stylistically related to the globes shown on the reverses of Spanish milled silver dollars prevalent in the Americas in the eighteenth century.

Among other designs suggested for the reverse were a view of the Administration Building at the Exposition, several varieties of perched eagles, and a flotilla consisting of the three vessels of Columbus, the *Niña*, the *Pinta*, and the *Santa Maria*.

A set of commemorative postage stamps was produced in connection with the Columbian Exposition. The *Santa Maria*, as shown on the reverse of the half dollar, is shown on the 3¢ stamp, and the $5 stamp bears a portrait of Columbus taken from the obverse of the half dollar, except that the face of Columbus is turned in the opposite direction. An admission ticket to the fair, printed by the American Bank Note Company, also displays the same visage. A 50¢ stamp for the fair, with a vignette designated as "The Recall of Columbus," was designed by Augustus G. Heaton, one of the most prominent American numismatists of the era.

The beautiful cylinder music boxes made in St. Croix, Switzerland, by Mermod Freres (Mermod Brothers) as exhibited at the Columbian Exposition. Such music boxes enjoyed a wide sale in the United States. (*Shepp's World's Fair Photographed*, 1893)

Minting the First Half Dollars

The first Columbian half dollar was struck at the Philadelphia Mint on November 19, 1892. Originally the initial coin was intended to be used in opening ceremonies for the Exposition, but by the autumn of 1892 the opening had been delayed and was many months in the offing. By this time the official *dedication* of the fair had come and gone.

The *Chicago Tribune* carried an account of the production of the first pieces, datelined Philadelphia, November 19, 1892:

> It was a $10,000 beauty that dropped today from the coin press at the United States Mint when the work of coining the Columbian half dollars began. Supt. Bosbyshell was on hand to represent the government, and James W. Ellsworth of the World's Fair Commission represented that body. There was great interest manifested in the affair because of the big premiums that have been offered for certain of the coins. In addition to the first one, there were also delivered to Mr. Ellsworth the 400th, 1492nd, and 1892nd coins of the new half dollars. Over 2,000 of the souvenirs were struck today, and the work will continue until all of the 5,000,000 donated [*sic*] by Congress are completed....
>
> When the hour arrived, Supt. Bosbyshell was summoned to the pressroom by Chief Coiner William S. Steele, while Engraver Charles Barber, who designed the famous coin, Chief Clerk M.N. Cobb, and others assembled as witnesses.... Foreman Albert Downing placed one of the blank planchets in the receiver and grasped the lever which raises the lower die, while Edwin Cliff, his assistant, stood at the balance wheel. Unfortunately, the first attempt was a failure—a little flaw caused the coin's rejection.
>
> The next attempt was made more carefully for the reputation of the coiners was at stake and they had resolved that the first approved souvenir of the Exposition should be a marvel of perfection and beauty. The planchet, before being accepted, was examined under the microscope and found without a blemish. For the second time, two workmen turned the press by hand, while the spectators waited in suspense. Again the coin was lifted from the face of the steel die and critically examined by Coiner Steele, Engraver Bar-

ber, and Supt. Bosbyshell. Every line was sharply defined, and the strong features of the discoverer of America, which adorn the coin, seemed to look approvingly on the work.

Cardboard boxes had been prepared for the reception of the coins, much like those in which pills are sold. No finger touched the first of the souvenirs, but the pliers gently clutched it by the rim and conveyed the $10,000 lump to the box which was immediately sealed and handed to the World's Fair commissioner. After the delivery of the first coin the foreman and his assistant continued coining by hand until they had struck 100 Proof pieces, occupying about an hour in the task. Power was then applied, and the actual work of making 5,000,000 half dollars went rapidly ahead....

Public Interest Continues

To capitalize on the intense nationwide interest in the Columbian half dollars, Wyckoff, Seamans & Benedict, makers of the Remington typewriter, garnered much publicity by purchasing the first specimen struck, paying the incredible sum of $10,000! The 400th, 1492nd and 1892nd half dollars, considered to be of special numerical consequence, were also sold at premiums, whereas the remaining coins were offered to the public for $1 each.

On December 16th the following newspaper notice appeared:

> The first 60,000 of the new Columbian souvenir half dollars were shipped this morning from the United States Mint in this city [Philadelphia]. The first delivery of 10,000 coins left on the 9:50 express for New York City, in possession of John F. Shriver, representing Colonel Elliott F. Shepard. The remaining 50,000...were placed in the hands of the United States Express Company consigned to the sub-treasury at Chicago and left on the Columbian Express over the Pennsylvania Railroad at 4:25 p.m.
>
> The 50,000 coins destined for Chicago occupied five kegs in sealed bags, marked $5,000 each. On the head of each keg was nailed a label marked "Colum-

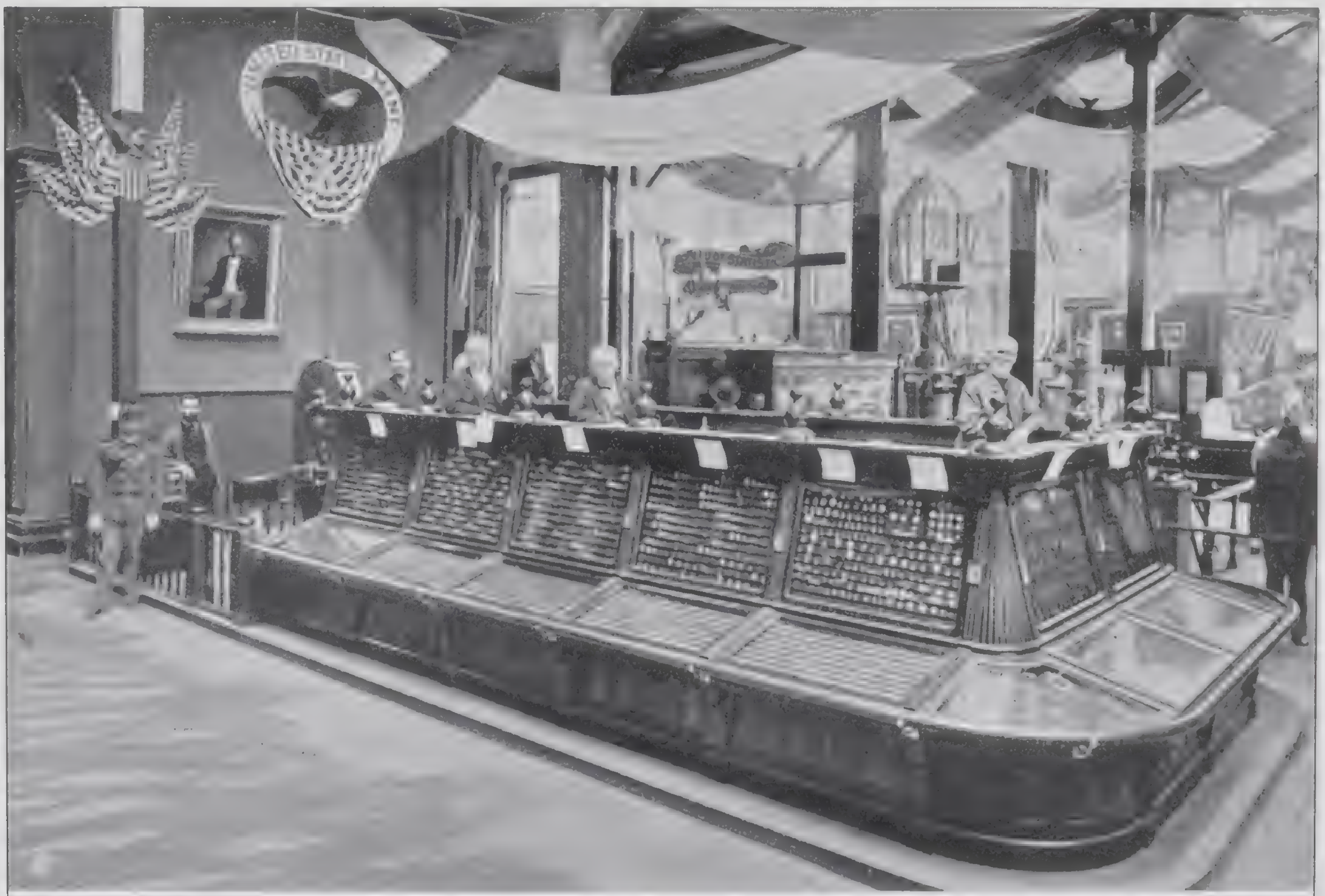

Exhibit set up by the Philadelphia Mint in the U.S. Government Building at the Columbian Exposition. On view were many of the Mint Collection rarities including the 1804 silver dollar (15 known) and 1849 $20 gold coin (unique) as well as various Proof coins, Washington tokens and medals, colonial issues, and more.

Mint Cabinet curator R.A. McClure arranged for about 7,000 coins and 2,000 medals to be put on display. The cases used were subsequently brought back to the Philadelphia Mint and used there in the front room on the second floor. Curator McClure, estimated the Mint Collection to be worth "upwards of $58,000." Apparently, this represented the intrinsic value, not the market value, of the pieces. (*Shepp's World's Fair Photographed,* 1893)

> bian Coins, 10,000 Half Dollars. Assistant Treasurer of the United States, Chicago, Ill." Each keg was sealed in such a manner that the seal must be broken in removing the head....

Subsequently a Chicago newspaper reported the arrival of the first shipment:

> Barrels of money were opened yesterday. This money was all of one denomination—silver half dollars with the glitter of the Mint in their milled edges. The face of Columbus was on one side; on the other side the caravel and two hemispheres, with the price marked in plain figures. A plain little man with iron-grey whiskers, chinchilla overcoat, and black derby hat went over to the Government Building yesterday afternoon accompanied by a dray and some hired help. He and his men loaded up five kegs of silver money and drove away to the offices of the World's Columbian Exposition.
>
> It was a little after 12 o'clock when a big wagon from Marshall Field's wholesale store pulled up on Quincy Street to await orders. It was drawn by a team of heavy bays and the driver was 'Elzie' Roe. Up in the fourth floor of the Rand-McNally building President Higinbotham was waiting for Vice-President Fred W. Peck and Treasurer Seeberger to get on their coats. The three dropped down the elevator, pursued by a curious crowd. Mr. Higinbotham went out to Quincy Street and waved his hand at "Elzie" on the high seat. Then he and Mr. Peck and Mr. Seeberger made a shortcut toward the Government Building with the dray close behind. The three Swedes with yarn mittens and comforters were waiting on Jackson Street when Mr. Higinbotham showed the dray where to back up. Their names were Charley Knutson, Otto Johnson, and Emil Olson. Charley went upstairs with the president to load the kegs in the elevator.
>
> About 20 people were waiting outside the Sub-Treasury railing when Mr. Higinbotham came in and shook hands with Cashier Whittemore through a square hole. The cashier pulled a string unlatching a side door, and a crowd went in to look at the kegs. President Higinbotham produced five large and fancy drafts upon the sub-treasurer, each calling for $5,000 in Columbian half dollars. He sat at a table and wrote on the back of each: "World's Columbian Exposition, H.N. Higinbotham, President."
>
> "That's all right," said Mr. Whittemore, accepting them.
>
> Charley Knutson began rolling the kegs into the elevator. Mr. Higinbotham disappeared into the wire cage carrying one of the sacks. The first three kegs were loaded on a hand truck at the foot of the elevator and wheeled out to the wagon. The other two came down a moment later. Mr. Higinbotham sat on one of the kegs, Mr. Peck took another, and Mr. Seeberger sat in gingerly fashion upon the sharp edge of the third. The Swede boys held onto the stakes along the side of the wagon bed, and the load moved west on Jackson Street to La Salle, north on La Salle to Quincy and west on Quincy to the Rand-McNally entrance. Here 50 people saw the stout workmen, two to a keg, carry the 300 pound packages to the elevator, which lifted them to the fourth floor. They were rolled into the little room adjoining Mr. Seeberger's office. Among those who came in were directors Thomas B. Bryan, J.W. Ellsworth, Adolph Nathan, and C.H. Schwab, Secretary H.O. Edmunson, J.F. McClain (representing Wyckoff, Seamans & Benedict), and a number of newspapermen.[1]
>
> "Gi'me that mallet." President Higinbotham threw off his coat and told the people to stand back. Someone handed him the mallet and cold-chisel, and with determined blows Mr. Higinbotham battered in the head of the keg marked "Special."
>
> "There it is," said Mr. Peck. Pushed in at one side of the snugly-tucked canvas bag was a cigar box. It was lifted out and inside was the packet showing daubs of sealing wax. Across the space was the certificate of Director Bosbyshell of the Philadelphia Mint that it contained the first Columbian half dollar coined at the Mint [and] that it contained numbers 400, 1492, and 1892. This packet was torn open and the shell was given to Mr. Schwab for safekeeping. The envelope marked "Number 1" was then carefully opened—the other three being tucked into the president's inside pocket. Out came a pill box and a folded piece of paper. The paper was another certificate, all signed and backed by affidavit, to show that the coin in the box was really number one.
>
> The box was sealed. Mr. Higinbotham ran his knife around the rim, and then lifting the cotton showed the precious white bits of metal. Without allowing his fingers to touch the coin he folded a bit of cotton over the edge and held up the original souvenir. "This coin has been bought by Wyckoff, Seamans & Benedict of New York for $10,000," said he. "It is the largest amount ever paid for a coin."...
>
> The other kegs were opened and the employees began the work of dividing the coins into small lots for distribution to the banks. After the excitement attending the arrival of the coins had subsided, the prosaic work of counting them out began. Judge Bryan, whose public spirit had prompted the first big subscription, got the first 5,000. They were taken to the Jennings Trust Company bank on Dearborn Street in the original packages bearing the Treasury seal. Judge Bryan reserved one of the canvas sacks full of souvenirs for the accommodation of Exposition officials and personal friends, and the rest were distributed by the trust company to a long line of subscribers who had

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[1] James W. Ellsworth was a prominent numismatist and art collector. His magnificent collection was sold for an incredible $100,000 in March 1923, via art dealers Knoedler & Co., to Wayte Raymond in a deal financed by John Work Garrett, who had first pick of the treasures. This was the highest-valued American numismatic transaction up to that time.

> been waiting impatiently to see the first of the new half dollars.
>
> Newspaper men got the first coins distributed by the trust company, and then the long lines of subscribers filed past windows and exchanged dollars for half-dollars. Directors of the Exposition stood around Judge Bryan's office in the Rand-McNally headquarters and awaited the chance to put the souvenirs in their pockets. Before the afternoon was over the corridors leading to and from the judge's room resounded with the clink of coins and the varying criticisms of amateur numismatists....
>
> Persons living in Chicago may secure souvenirs in any number by leaving orders with any of the Chicago banks or by personal application at the treasurer's office, fourth floor, Rand-McNally building, 168 Adams Street. Receipts will be given and orders filled in the order of application. Persons living outside of Chicago can have coins delivered to them, carriage prepaid, by ordering through the nearest bank; if no bank is accessible a money order or registered letter addressed to the Treasurer, World's Columbian Exposition, and giving directions for shipment will secure the souvenirs at a net cost to purchaser of $1 each coin.

What "They" Said

It had long been the case that, when a new United States coin was presented to the public, great criticism erupted. In 1793, when the chain-design cent first made its appearance in circulation, a newspaper article related that Miss Liberty appeared to be in a fright and that the linked chain device on the reverse was but an ill omen for a nation desiring liberty. In 1878, when the first Morgan silver dollar reached the public, the eagle on the reverse was described as a buzzard. Few people liked it. In 1892 the same was true of the Columbian half dollar as well. When Treasury officials in Washington saw the first pieces, they reacted with disappointment, as this article datelined Washington, November 30, 1892, relates:

> Two samples of the new World's Fair souvenir coins came from the Director of the Mint in Philadelphia this morning to be tested. There was a rush among the Treasury officials to get a look at the first of the new half dollars that have yet been sent to the Treasury. The samples were a disappointment, to say the least. The obverse side on which the Columbus head appears comes in for considerable criticism by the Treasury experts.
>
> "Whatever value attaches to the coins," said a Mint officer, "will be due to the fact that they are souvenirs and not for any beauty which they possess. In fact they are the ugliest coins I ever saw....

Throughout America, comments were registered in newspapers, most of them unfavorable, as members of the public tried to outdo each other in devising innovative complaints. That in the *Galveston Daily News* was particularly dramatic:

> The front side of the coin has an elegant likeness of the late Sitting Bull. This, however, is said to be meant for Columbus. The patriotic American can take his choice, and the know-nothings certainly will claim the head to be intended for Sitting Bull because of that gentleman being an American. On the right shoulder appears the letter B. This certainly indicates the location of either a boil or a barnacle.[1]
>
> There is also a likeness of Columbus' ship under full sail. At first blush the ship seems to be on wheels, but closer examination shows that the two wheels are the eastern and western hemispheres. The ship seems to be surrounded by a herd of porpoises, but probably this is meant for waves. There is also a fishing pole rigged out of an after port in the cabin of the ship, and one gathers an idea that the venturesome mariner is either baiting his hook and lying about a bite he has just had, or has hauled in a fish, for the line is taken aboard ship.
>
> The figures 1492 appear beneath the vessel. The coin is of the same size and weight as the old run of half dollars, and for all they are sold at a heavy premium, the purchasing power is but ten beers."

Great Expectations

A month or so later a newspaper report noted that the Mint was working full speed ahead to churn out the production order of 5,000,000 pieces:

> Advice from Washington gave notice that the Treasury has ordered the shipment of 68,000 souvenir coins to Chicago. These coins will be the last with 1892 on them, the rest of the 5 million bearing the date of 1893. So far the Treasury has paid out 720,000 half dollars on approved vouchers. The Mint is running full capacity, 20,000 coins daily, and at that rate it will be until the last of July before the issue is completed.

The coinage in 1892 amounted to 950,000 Columbian Exposition half dollars, whereas those dated 1893 were produced to the extent of 4,052,105, for a total of 5,002,105. This amounted to the authorized quantity of five million coins plus 2,105 extras minted for assay purposes. *Seemingly,* the coins were a smash success—and it was all the Mint could do to supply the fantastic demand.

Visitors to the fair were given the opportunity to buy souvenir half dollars for the much-criticized price of one dollar each. Displays of Columbian half dollars helped promote sales. In the rotunda of the Administration Building at the fair was a model of the

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[1] The B was Chief Engraver Charles Barber's initial.

Treasury Building in Washington, constructed of Columbian half dollars, measuring 20 feet long, 11 feet wide, and four feet high. Viewers were advised that "coins sold will be taken from the columns" of the model, but as no coins could be removed until the closing of the Exposition, it is to be inferred that most intending purchasers bought their Columbian half dollars elsewhere at the event.

Clipped Columbian half dollars used to construct the angles and corners of the model were struck in white metal rather than the usual silver alloy.[1] In the nearby Liberal Arts Building there was another model, a 20-foot-high shaft, also made of commemorative half dollars.

However, after the Exposition closed and sales efforts ended, 3,600,000 half dollars remained unsold, of which about 1,400,000 were held by the Treasury in Washington, 960,000 in Chicago, and 147,700 at the Philadelphia Mint. This amounted to 72% of the entire mintage! Clearly, something had gone wrong. It seems that the novelty soon faded, and after the first rush, sales were slow. However, not to impair the success of the fair, the publicity mill kept churning. Only later was the truth evident.

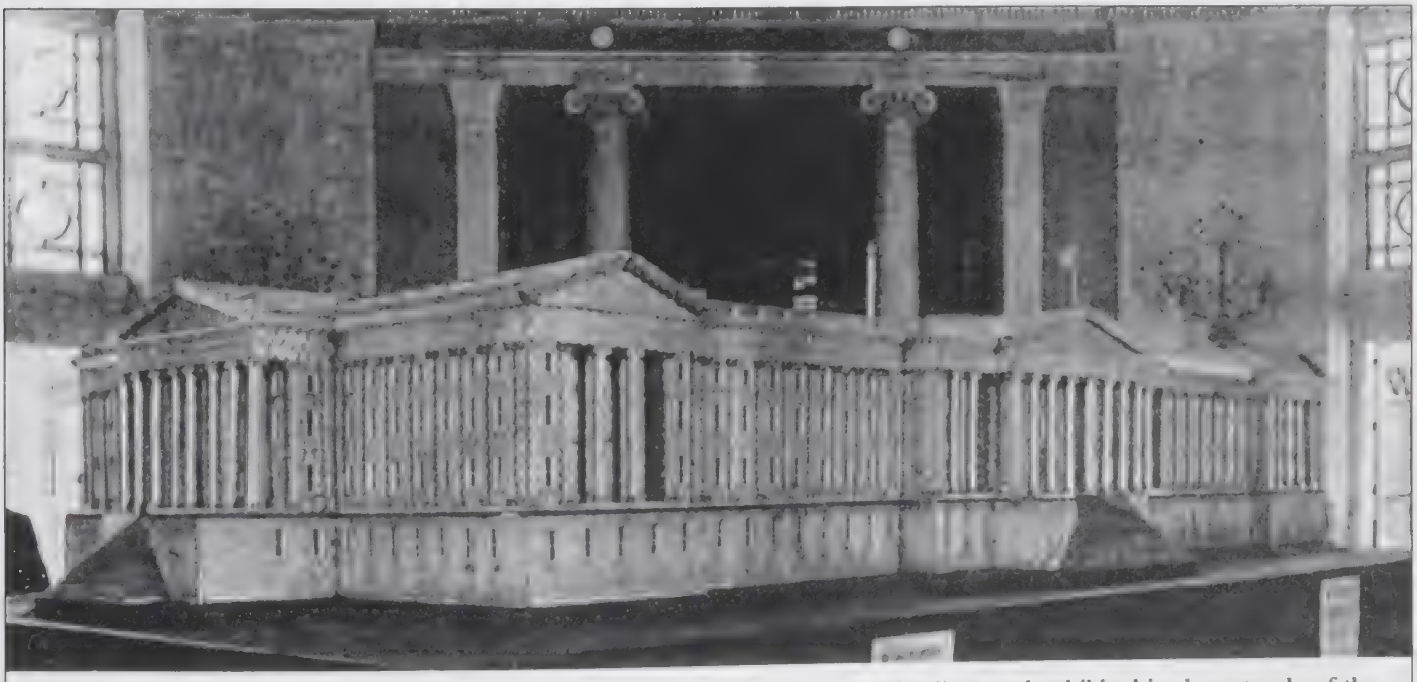
What to do with this vast hoard was hotly debated, for the managers of the Exposition felt that the investment of those who paid $1 each for the coins should be protected.

After the Exposition

The *New York Sun*, December 10, 1893, printed the following:

> It was reported that Mr. Ellsworth,[2] representing the commissioners of the Exposition, called at the Treasury Department and paid to Acting Secretary Curtis $40,300 to defray the cost of transporting and recoining the unsold half dollars which was said to exceed the total face value of $1,700,000. Secretary Carlisle was requested to recoin the twenty-five and fifty-cent souvenirs at the expense of the government, but this he declined to do, and notified the Commission unless it bore the expense of the recoinage he would issue the souvenir pieces at their face value. As this would materially reduce the value of those in the hands of purchasers and speculative holders, Mr. Ellsworth was sent to make the necessary deposit.

Apparently, the preceding account was inaccurate, for in 1894 the Treasury announced that the remaining Columbian half dollars were available for face value to anyone desiring them. Takers were few, so many coins were subsequently put into circulation, and others were melted. By the turn of the century Columbian half dollars were familiar items in pocket change.



Very large model of the U.S. Treasury Building made of Columbian half dollars and exhibited in the rotunda of the Administration Building at the Exposition. (*World's Columbian Exposition Illustrated*, Vol. III)

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[1] The writer is not aware of any of these white metal impressions in existence today.

[2] Col. James W. Ellsworth, who during the next two decades would build a rare coin collection of immense importance.

When all was said and done, 950,000 Columbian half dollars dated 1892 were distributed, and 1,550,405 were released dated the following year, 1893. This amounted to about half of the original mintage of five million coins.

For years thereafter such coins were familiar sights in cash drawers and bank deposits. As late as the 1950s, worn Columbian half dollars of 1892 and 1893 were worth only about 60¢ to 65¢ each. During that decade, a coin dealer in downtown Boston showed a bushel basket full of them in his shop window.

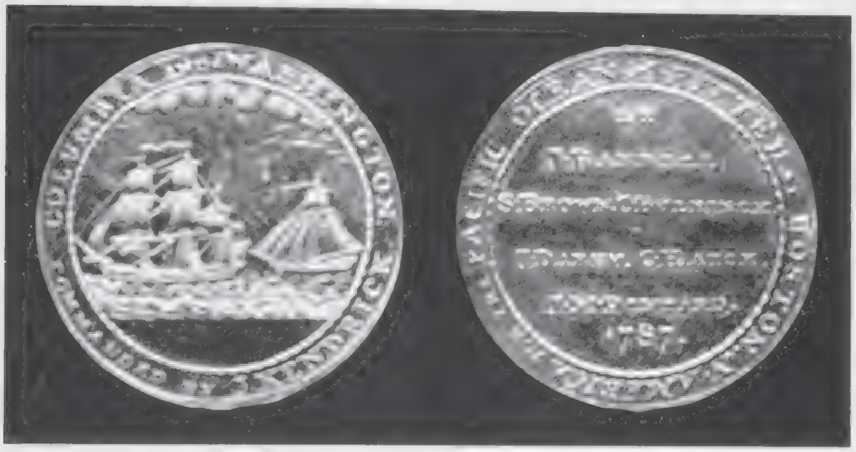
Today, the Columbian halves are readily available in all grades including Mint State, although gems are somewhat elusive, as few people thought to preserve them carefully. These served as the launching pad for a series of commemorative half dollars that through 1954 (1892-1954 being the "classic era" of the series) saw the production of 48 different designs and 142 different varieties, the latter mostly consisting of date and mintmark variations among later issues.

For the same Exposition, an issue of 1893 Isabella quarter dollars was produced. These were offered for $1 each, but sales were very slow, as the public thought that for $1 a half dollar represented a better value than a quarter. The next commemorative silver coin was a silver dollar honoring George Washington and Marquis de Lafayette, issued in December 1899 and dated 1900.

Adventures Nos. 29 to 31

The Northwest Trio

The 1787 Columbia *and* Washington *Medal*
The 1820 North West Company Token
The 1925 Fort Vancouver Half Dollar



Columbia *and* Washington *medal dated 1787, possibly from dies cut by Paul Revere. The* Columbia *was commanded by J. Kendrick, whose name appears at the lower border of the obverse of the medal. These pieces, struck in copper (mostly) and silver, were distributed at various ports of call. Today, only a handful survive. During the voyage, Kendrick swapped vessels with Captain Robert Gray of the* Washington, *and departed with the* Washington *to China. (F.W. Howay,* Voyages of the "Columbia"*; specimen in the cabinet of the Massachusetts Historical Society)*

* * *

The Pacific Northwest Fur Trade
Three Favorite Numismatic Items

In the wide field of Western Americana, many books have been published on fur trappers, mountain men, and other pioneers who earned their living by hunting, fishing, trapping, and trading in the Pacific Northwest, in particular the vast district that now comprises the states of Washington and Oregon.

A highly important trading center established in 1825 was Fort Vancouver, operated by the Hudson's Bay Company. In 1925 this was memorialized on a special commemorative half dollar.

The three numismatic items discussed here—the 1787 Columbia and Washington medal, the 1820 North West Company token, and the 1925 Fort Vancouver silver commemorative half dollar—have been among my favorites for a long time. This is their story, beginning with a scene-setting discourse published in *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine and Commercial Review*, 1846:[1]

> **Sturgis Lectures on the Fur Trade**
>
> We are indebted to Elliot C. Cowdin, Esq., the president of the Mercantile Library Association of Boston, for the somewhat extended sketch of the Hon. William Sturgis's valuable lecture upon the "Northwest Fur Trade," delivered before that association, on Wednesday evening, January 21st, 1846. The report was prepared by Mr. Cowdin, with much care, from the original manuscript, and can, therefore, be relied upon for its entire accuracy. Mr. Sturgis, the author of the lecture, is well known as one of the most eminent merchants of Boston; and his reputation in that city, for practical intelligence and sterling good sense, stands very high.
>
> In commencing, the lecturer observed that, at this present moment, when the public attention is anxiously directed to the partition, or other disposition, of a large portion of the northwestern part of our continent, as a ques-

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[1] Subtitles and footnotes added.

tion seriously affecting both our domestic and foreign relations, anything respecting that country, or its native population, assumes a more than ordinary interest.

Mr. Sturgis said that, in early life, he made several successful voyages, to what was then deemed a remote and unexplored region, and passed a number of years among a people, at that time, just becoming known to the civilized world. His first visit to Nootka Sound was made in the last century, about twenty years after it was discovered by Captain Cook.

Though not one of the first, he was amongst those who early engaged in the Northwest trade, so called, and continued to carry it on, either personally or otherwise, until it ceased to be valuable. He thus witnessed its growth, maximum, decrease, and finally, its abandonment by Americans. These early visits afforded him an opportunity, too, of observing changes in the habits and manners of the Indians, effected by intercourse with a more civilized race; and, he regretted to add, brought to his knowledge the injustice, violence, and bloodshed, which has marked the progress of this intercourse.

Mr. Sturgis did not expect others would feel the same interest in the reminiscences that he felt, but he thought they might engage the attention of his hearers, and perhaps awaken a sympathy for the remnant of a race fast disappearing from the earth—victims of injustice, cruelty, and oppression—and of a policy that seems to recognize power as the sole standard of right.

The show, this evening, the lecturer proposed to devote principally to the fur trade, and some matters connected with it; and, in the next lecture, he should speak of the habits, peculiarities, language, and some features in the general character of the Indians. But that branch of the subject most deeply interesting to them, occurrences upon the coast within his own knowledge, of treatment which the Indians had received from the white men, must be postponed to some future occasion.

The Northwest trade, as far as we are concerned, has ceased to be of importance in a commercial view; but a branch of commerce, (said Mr. Sturgis) in which a number of American vessels, and many seamen and others were constantly and profitably employed, for more than forty years—which brought wealth to those engaged in it, and was probably as beneficial to the country as any commercial use of an equal amount of capital has ever been—cannot be without interest as matter of unwritten history, and may, perhaps, illustrate some principles of commerce deserving our notice and consideration.

The Fur Trade of Years Past

This trade, in which our citizens largely participated, and at one period nearly monopolized, was principally limited to the sea-coast between the mouth of the Columbia River, in latitude 46°, and Cook's Inlet, in latitude 60°, to the numerous islands bordering this whole extent of coast, and the sounds, bays, and inlets, within these limits. Trade was always carried along-side, or on board the ship, usually anchored near the shore, the Indians coming off in their canoes. It was seldom safe to admit many of the natives into the ship at the same time, and a departure from this prudent course, has, in numerous instances, been followed by the most disastrous and tragic results.

The vessels usually employed were from 100 to two 250 tons burthen, each. The time occupied for a voyage by vessels remained upon the coast only a single season, was from twenty-two months to two years, but they generally remained out two seasons, and were absent from home nearly three years. The principal object of the voyages was to procure the skins of the sea-otter, which were obtained from the natives by barter, carried to Canton, and there exchanged for the productions of the Celestial Empire [China], to be brought home or taken to Europe, thus completing what may be called a trading voyage.

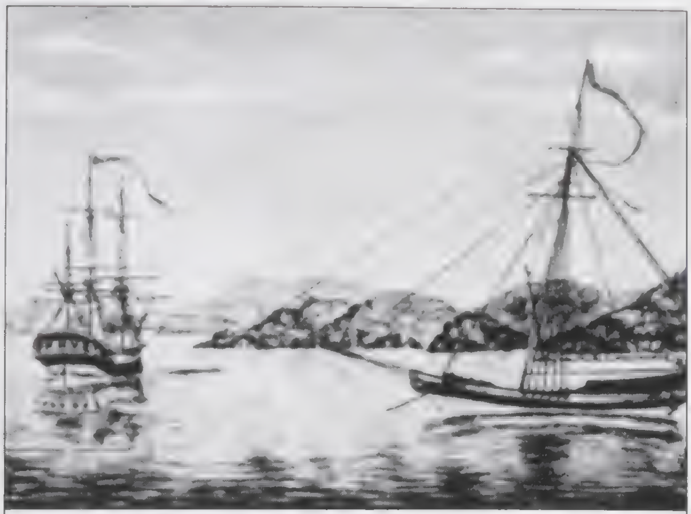
Beaver and Otter Skins

Beaver and common otter skins, and other small furs, were occasionally procured in considerable quantities, but in the early period of trade, they were deemed unimportant, and little attention was given to collecting them. The sea-otter skins have ever been held in high estimation by the Chinese and Russians, as an ornamental fur; but its great scarcity and consequent cost, limits the wear to the wealthy and higher classes only.

A full grown prime skin, which has been stretched before drying, is about five feet long, and 24 to 30 inches wide, covered with very fine fur, about three-fourths of an inch in length, having a rich jet black, glossy surface, and exhibiting a silver color when blown open. Those are esteemed the finest skins which have some white hairs interspersed and scattered over the whole surface, and a perfectly white head. Mr. Sturgis said that it would now give him more pleasure to look at a splendid sea-otter skin, than to examine half the pictures that are struck up for exhibition, and puffed up by pretended connoisseurs. In fact, excepting a beautiful woman and a lovely infant, he regarded them as among the most attractive natural objects that can be placed before him.

Eighteenth-Century Trade

The sea-otter has been only found in the North Pacific. The earliest efforts on record to collect furs in that region, were made by the Russians from Kamschatka, who, in the early part of the last century, visited for this purpose, the Kurile and other islands that lie near the northern coasts of Asia. After the expedition of Behring & Co., in 1741, these excursions were slowly extended to other groups between the two continents, and when Cook, in 1778, explored these northern regions, he met with Russian adventurers upon several of the islands in proximity with the American shore. It was, however, the publication of



The *Columbia Rediviva* (left) and the *Lady Washington*, generally referred to as the *Columbia* and *Washington*. (F.W. Howay, *Voyages of the "Columbia"*)

Cook's northern voyages in 1785, that gave the great impulse to the Northwest fur trade, and drew adventurers from several nations to that quarter.

The published journal of Captain King, who succeeded to command of one of the ships after the death of Captains Cook and Clark, and his remarks, setting forth the favorable prospects for this trade, doubtless roused the spirit of adventure. Between the time of publication referred to, in 1785, and the close of 1787, expeditions were fitted out from Canton, Macao, Calcutta and Bombay, in the East, London and Ostend in Europe, and from Boston in the United States.

The *Columbia* and *Washington*

In 1787, the first American expedition was fitted out, and sailed from Boston. It consisted of the ship *Columbia*, of 220 tons, and the sloop *Washington*, of 90 tons burthen—the former commanded by John Kendrick,[1] the latter by Robert Gray.

Mr. Sturgis deemed it scarcely possible, in the present age, when the departure or return of ships engaged in distant voyages is an every-day occurrence, to appreciate the magnitude of this undertaking, or the obstacles and difficulties that had to be surmounted in carrying it out.

He said, were he required to select any particular event in the commercial history of our country, to establish our reputation for bold enterprise and preserving energy, in commercial pursuits, he should point to this expedition of the *Columbia* and *Washington*. Many of the obstacles and dangers were clearly pointed out, showing that it was then viewed as an extraordinary undertaking.

Medals Struck

A medal was struck upon the occasion, and by some impressions taken out in the vessels for distribution. The lecturer briefly described it, and exhibited to the audience a facsimile of one preserved in the Department of State at Washington. One side of this medal was engraved "Columbia and Washington: commanded by J. Kendrick," with a representation of the two vessels; on the reverse was the following inscription: "Fitted at Boston, N. America, for the Pacific Ocean, by J. Burrell, C. Brown, C. Bulfinch, J. Darby, C. Hatch, J.M. Pintard, 1787."

Captain Kendrick, who was entrusted with the command of the expedition, was a bold, energetic, experienced seaman. His management justified the confidence reposed in him, but he was fated never to return.

"Eccentric" Ledyard

The project of engaging in the fur trade of the North Pacific, from this country, was first brought forward by the celebrated American traveler, [John] Ledyard. In his erratic wanderings, he entered on board the ship *Resolution*, as corporal of marines, with Captain Cook, upon his last voyage [aboard the *Resolution*]. After his return, he made repeated attempts to get an outfit for a voyage to the Northwest Coast.

In 1784, three years previous to Kendrick's expedition, he induced Robert Morris to engage in the undertaking. But for some cause, now unknown, the enterprise was abandoned, as were similar ones in France and England. The unfortunate Ledyard seemed doomed to disappointment in whatever he undertook. The life of this remarkable man shows that respectable talents, united with great energy and perseverance of character, may be comparatively valueless to the possessor, and useless to the world, from the want of a well-balanced mind, which, unfortunately, was the fatal deficiency in Ledyard.

Nearly all the early and distinguished navigators, who discovered and explored the northern regions of the Pacific, met the fate that too often awaits the pioneers in bold and hazardous undertakings, and found a premature death, by violence or disaster, or disease brought on by incessant toil and exposure.

Other Early Explorers

Behring, a Danish navigator in the service of Russia, who commanded the expedition just mentioned, was wrecked in 1741 upon an island that bears his name, and perished miserably in the course of the winter. He was the first navigator known to have passed through that strait that separates Asia from America; and Cook, who was the next to sail through it, in a commendable spirit of justice, gave to this strait the name of the unfortunate Behring. The fate of Cook is well known. He was killed by the natives of the Sandwich Islands, of which group he was the discoverer.

Mr. Sturgis said he had stood upon the spot where Cook fell, in Karakakooa Bay, and conversed with the natives who were present at the time of the massacre. They uniformly expressed regret and sorrow for his death, but insisted that it was caused by his own imprudence.

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[1] Spelled "Kenrick" and "Kenrich" in the original text; here corrected.

The lecturer next gave an interesting account of the loss of two French vessels fitted out in 1785, on a voyage of discovery and exploration, which, after visiting the northwest coast of America, departed for Sydney, in New South Wales, early in 1788, and nothing more was heard from them until 1826, when a wreck and some articles were found at the island of Malicolo, in the South Pacific, that left no doubt but the unfortunate Frenchmen perished there.

Vancouver, an able British navigator, was sent out by his government in 1790, to receive Nootka Sound from the Spaniards, and explore the whole western coast of North America. The chart prepared by him is the most accurate of any at the present day. With a constitution shattered by devotion to his arduous duties, he returned to England in 1794, and sunk into an early grave.

More of the *Columbia* and *Washington*

Kendrick was fated never to return. After remaining with both vessels two seasons on the northwest coast, he sent the *Columbia* home, in charge of Captain Gray, and remained himself in the sloop *Washington*. He continued in her several years, trading on the coast and at the Sandwich Islands.

In 1793, while lying in the harbor of Honolulu, at one of these islands, and receiving, upon his birthday, a complimentary salute from the captain of an English trading vessel anchored near, he was instantly killed by a shot carelessly left in one of the guns fired on the occasion.

Captain Gray reached home in the *Columbia*, in the summer of 1790, and thus completed the first circumnavigation of the globe under the American flag. He was immediately fitted out for a second voyage in the same ship, and it was during this voyage that he discovered, entered, and gave the name to the Columbia River, a circumstance now relied upon as one of the strongest grounds to maintain our claim to the Oregon Territory. He died abroad some years ago.

Mr. Sturgis here observed that it would bring some of the events of which he had spoken quite near our own time, to mention that in the street in which we are, (Federal Street) the name of "Gray" may be seen upon the door of a house nearly opposite Milton Place, which house is now occupied by the widow and daughters of Captain Gray, the discoverer of the Columbia River, and the first circumnavigator who bore the flag of our country in triumph round the world.

The voyage of the *Columbia* was not profitable to her owners, in a pecuniary view, but it opened the way for other adventures, which were commenced on her return.

In 1791, there were seven vessels from the United States in the North Pacific, in pursuit of furs. For various reasons, the American traders so far gained the ascendancy, that at the close of the last century, with the exception of the Russian establishments on the northern part of the coast, the whole trade was in our hands, and so remained until the close of the war with Great Britain, in 1815.

This trade was confined almost exclusively to Boston. It was attempted, unsuccessfully, from Philadelphia, and New York, and from Providence and Bristol, in Rhode Island. Even the intelligent and enterprising merchants of Salem, failed of success; some of them, however, were interested in several of the most successful northwestern voyages carried on from Boston.

So many of the vessels engaged in this trade belonged here, the Indians had the impression that Boston was our whole country. Had any one spoken to them of American ships, or American people, he would not have been understood. We were only known as Boston ships, and Boston people.

Focus on the
Columbia *and* Washington *Medal*

More about the Medals

The idea of the *Columbia* had its beginning in 1784 when Captain Cook's journal of his third voyage awakened a widespread interest in the possibility of an important trade in the Northwest Coast.

The *Columbia Rediviva*, usually called the *Columbia*, as finally constructed was a full-rigged ship, 83 feet long, which displaced 212 tons. A consort was provided for her by the *Lady Washington*, usually cited simply as the *Washington*, a sloop of 90 tons. Interesting, the dropping of the *Lady* in popular usage has resulted in some demand for this medal by collectors of *George* Washington numismatica.

Today the ship is remembered in the name of the Columbia River. The voyage was the first in which the American flag was carried to this district of the Pacific Northwest.

The introductory notes of a journal kept by John Hoskins for the second voyage of the *Columbia* included this concerning the *first* voyage:[1]

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[1] The standard reference on the voyage is by Frederic W. Howay (editor), *Voyages of the "Columbia" to the Northwest Coast 1787-1790 and 1790-1793* by F.W. Howay, Massachusetts Historical Society, 1941. • This citation is from Howay, p. 162, from pp. 2-3 of Hoskins' journal; here edited for punctuation. • Other sources include: "The Ship *Columbia* and the Discovery of Oregon" by Edward G. Porter, in the *New England Magazine*, Vol. 6, 1892, pages 272-278; and Malcolm Storer, *Numismatics of Massachusetts*, published as Volume 76 in the *Collections of The Massachusetts Historical Society*. Described were over 2,000 medals of which most were from the MHS Collection. The *Columbia* and *Washington* medal is listed as number 202 and shown on plate 2.

> 1787. That nothing might be wanting to commemorate the voyage and to place a lasting memento in those countries which might be visited or discovered, during its continuance, the owners caused several hundred medals[1] to be struck, and sent to those vessels. On the one side was the Ship and Sloop, encircled with theirs and the commander's name. On the other, the names of the owners, to wit: Joseph Barrell, Samuel Brown, Crowel Hatch, John Derby, Charles Bulfinch, and John Marsden Pintard, esquires; encircled with, Fitted at Boston, North America, for the Pacific Ocean 1787.
>
> They caused also about a dozen silver ones to be struck, one of which was sent to General Washington, who politely returned his thanks, and paid the owners a very flattering compliment on the occasion; at the same time express'd his best wishes for their success.
>
> October 1787. Everything being ready for sea, both vessels sail'd in company, on the 1st of October,[2] for St. Jago's, one of the Cape de Verde islands, where Captain Kendrick, for some reasons, tarried forty odd days, when he sailed for the Falkland Islands; where he fill'd up his water, and on the last of February sailed to double Cape Horn. It being a late season of the year, he had a very boisterous time, and in a gale of wind, on the 1st of April, the two vessels lost sight of each other; nor did they meet again, till they arriv'd at Nootka Sound....

The *Columbia* returned to Boston on August 10, 1790.

Although "several hundred medals" went to sea and, presumably, were distributed, probably fewer than a dozen copper examples are known today together with only a handful of pewter and silver impressions. The nature of the "facsimile" held by the State Department and mentioned in the 1846 article above is not known.

As the dies were in very shallow relief, known originals are weak in spots. Some numismatic authorities have stated the dies were engraved by Paul Revere, and it may have been, but no substantiation has been found.

Jeremiah Colburn Pens an Article

The *American Journal of Numismatics* (*AJN*) made its entry in 1866, and quickly became the forum for the exchange of ideas.[3] Earlier, commentaries about numismatic items had appeared on occasion in dealers' price lists, auction catalogues, *Historical Magazine,* and certain city newspapers, but nowhere on a regular, consistent basis.

In July 1870, this appeared in the *AJN*, a contribution of Jeremiah Colburn, some of this being similar to the article published by *Hunt's* in 1846, but with a numismatic emphasis:[4]

> ### An Early Boston Medal
>
> A medal was struck (in Boston?) in silver, copper and white metal, in 1787, to commemorate the fitting out of two vessels—the *Columbia* and the *Washington*—for trading on the North-West Coast. The following description is made from one before us, belonging to

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[1] [Original footnote in Howay's text:] John Henry Cox found some of these medals at Hawaii in September 1789, and gave a description of them; see George Mortimer, *Observations and Remarks Made during a Voyage in the Brig Mercury* (Dublin, 1791), p. 88. Martinez reports in his ms. diary, under date May 8, 1789, that two of them were found that day on his vessel. A reproduction of the medal will be found in this volume.

[2] The *Columbia* was set to sail on September 30, 1787, but weighed anchor on October 1. September 30 is given as the sailing date in certain accounts.

[3] Proposed by well-known token and medal collector Joseph N.T. Levick at the March 8, 1866, meeting of the American Numismatic and Archaeological Society (renamed from the American Numismatic Society; the ANS designation would be resumed on July 1, 1907), the *American Journal of Numismatics* was published on a monthly basis in New York from May 1866 until April 1870, after which it was transferred to the Boston Numismatic Society and became a quarterly. Years later, it was reacquired by the New York group, and until about 1914 it was a valuable journal of record, later changing to a series of monographs published irregularly. In the meantime, the "journal of record" for the hobby became *The Numismatist,* a monthly first published in 1888.

[4] Born in Boston on January 12, 1815, at a young age Jeremiah Colburn became a clerk in the hat store of Seth J. Thomas, and in 1840 took over his business at 60 Washington Street. On April 30, 1846, he married Eliza Ann Blackman of Dorchester, MA. The couple had one child who died in infancy. On March 8, 1852, he was appointed by President Franklin Pierce to be the U.S. appraiser in the Custom House for the Port of Boston, a position which he filled until June 1860, after which he spent most of his time in antiquarian and literary endeavors. From the 1850s through the 1880s, Colburn was an éminence grise, lending, usually without credit, assistance to dealers, collectors, and authors. When *Historical Magazine* began publication in 1857, he became its main numismatic authority and a frequent contributor, especially under the "Notes and Queries" heading. In the same era he contributed numismatic articles to newspapers, especially the *Boston Evening Transcript.* He may have been the very first person to publish detailed information about die varieties of early American copper cents. In 1859 he was one of nine numismatists to be honored by Augustus B. Sage as a subject in his portrait medal series, "Numismatic Gallery." From time to time he advertised as a coin dealer at 17 Bromfield Street, Boston, in 1870, and as a dealer in coin publications at 18 Somerset Street in the same city, 1877 and other later years. Part of his collection was purchased en bloc and auctioned by W. Elliot Woodward, April 28 to May 1, 1863. A larger sale of Colburn material was held by the same auctioneer, October 20-24, 1863. Colburn's name also appeared on Woodward's catalogue of December 19, 1865. Years later on January 21-22, 1889, Woodward described Lot 1120 as follows: "Coin cabinet of Jeremiah Colburn. Elegantly made; built by Hancock of Boston, celebrated as the best cabinet maker in the state. Mahogany, with massive silver-plated handles. Contains 30 drawers lined with black velvet, one of which is missing; each 11 x 9 x 3/8 in. deep. The inside of the drop door is covered with black morocco, gilt. Size 23$^1/_2$ x 23$^1/_2$ x 15." Without a doubt, Jeremiah Colburn should be honored as one of the most knowledgeable individuals in the history of American numismatics, although to a later generation his name was almost unknown.

Mr. Sylvester S. Crosby, a member of the Boston Numismatic Society:

COLUMBIA and WASHINGTON, commanded by J. KENDRICK, with a ship and a sloop in the centre. Obverse. FITTED at BOSTON, N. AMERICA, for the PACIFIC OCEAN, by J. Barrell, S. Brown, C. Bulfinch, J. Darby, C. Hatch, J.M. Pintard, 1787.*[1]

*The *Washington* at this time was commanded by Captain Robert Gray, who afterward, while in command of the *Columbia*, discovered the river which now bears his vessel's name. They, moreover, carried out, for distribution at such places as they might visit, a number of small copper coins, then recently issued by the State of Massachusetts, and likewise medals of copper, struck expressly for that purpose, of one of which a representation is given, in Robert Greenhow's *History of Oregon and California*, Boston, 1844. Alexander Mackenzie, in July, 1793, found, in the possession of a native of the country east of the Strait of Fuca, a halfpenny of the State of Massachusetts Bay, coined in 1787, which was doubtless one of those taken out by Kendrick and Gray.[2] —S.A.G.

Captain John Kendrick was born on Martha's Vineyard, and at one time resided at Wareham, Mass. He was captain of a privateer during the war of the American Revolution. He was killed by the bursting of a cannon on the North-West Coast, about the year 1800 [actually 1793].

The *Columbia* was commanded by John Kendrick, the *Washington* by Capt. Robert Gray; they sailed from Boston on the 30th of September, 1787.

Capt. Gray first saw the mouth of the Columbia River, and was the discoverer. Thence he took a cargo to China, and from there to Boston, where he arrived in August, 1790. He sailed again and reached the Straits of Fuca in June, 1791. In the spring of 1792, he made another voyage from there to Canton, and thence to the United States. He continued to command trading vessels from Boston, until his death at Charleston, S.C., in 1806. He was born at Tiverton, R.I., in 1755. Two of his daughters are still living in Boston.

Joseph Barrell was an affluent and well known citizen of Boston.

Charles Bulfinch, a native of Boston, graduated at Harvard College in 1781; was an architect by profession.[3] He drew the plans in the State House in Boston, and of the Capitol at Washington, in which city he lived for several years. He died in Boston, April 15, 1844.

Samuel Brown was a native of Newport, R.I.; he came to Boston at an early age, was a successful merchant, and highly respected. He died in Boston, and his remains were carried to Newport.

John Derby, sometimes written Darby, a descendant of Roger Derby, one of the first settlers of Salem, was a shipmaster and merchant of Salem, Mass., where he was born June 7, 1741; died December 5, 1812.

Crowell Hatch was a well known merchant of Boston.[4]

Of John M. Pintard we have been unable to learn anything.[5]

We understand that it is in contemplation, by parties interested in the narrative of the enterprise to which the above medal refers, to publish an account of it at an early day.

J.C.

The same issue of the *American Journal of Numismatics* included this further comment, probably by editor Samuel Abbott Green, M.D., shedding light upon Pintard, of whom Colburn was not able to give information:[6]

John M. Pintard, mentioned in connection with the above medal, was a merchant at the Island of Madeira. He was appointed Consul of the United States, at that Port, June 7th, 1790, and was succeeded by Mr. M. Lamar, in 1803.

We have found in our collection of autograph letters, the following addressed to a distinguished merchant of Salem, Mass.

MADEIRA, 17th December, 1791

[to] Elias H. Derby, Esq., Salem:

SIR:—This serves to hand you a state of our markets at present for the produce of your country, which you will observe is very favorable for Beef, Port and Codfish, a cargo or two of which would arrive to a great market. The first ought to be here by the last of February, and the Beef and Pork by the 1st of April. We have had no Horses imported here for these twelve months. A cargo or two of about 14 or 18 in each cargo, would arrive to a good market.

Should you think proper to speculate this way, and choose to entrust your business to me, you may rely on my utmost exertions to render you pleasing sales. I

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[1] The following paragraph quoted above represents the starred note in the original article, the contribution of Boston numismatist Samuel Abbott Green, who edited many of the articles in the publication.

[2] Although a 1787 Massachusetts half cent might have been taken out on the *second* voyage of the *Columbia*, 1790, that it could have been on the first is a chronological impossibility, as in a speech of October 18, 1787, by which time the *Columbia* and its escort had departed from Boston, the governor of Massachusetts noted that (italics added): "In consequence of an act made October 1786, a mint has been erected for coining cents, and a very considerable quantity of copper *will soon be ready* for circulation...."

[3] Bulfinch had just returned from pursuing special studies in Europe.

[4] Hatch resided in Cambridge.

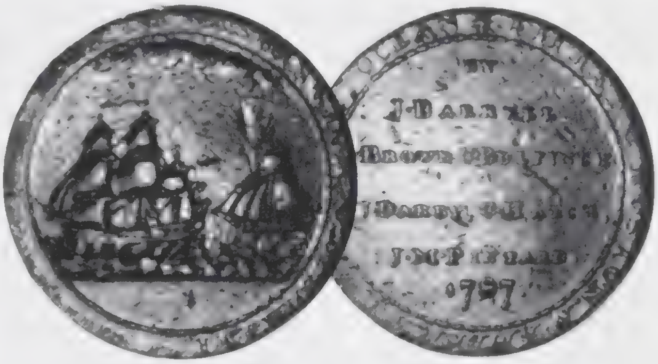
[5] John Martin Pintard was associated with the New York house of Lewis Pintard & Co.

[6] Dr. Green succeeded Jeremiah Colburn and became the third president of the Boston Numismatic Society.

> am, with respect, Sir, your most obedient and very humble servant,
>
> John M. Pintard

The Garrett Specimen

From 1979 through 1981, I and others on the staff of my company were busy cataloguing the Garrett Collection, which had been consigned by The Johns Hopkins University. The cabinet had been formed by T. Harrison Garrett, whose family was the principal controlling interest in the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. In the 1880s this was America's finest cabinet in private hands, with the Lorin G. Parmelee Collection coming in second. After Garrett's death in a boating accident in Chesapeake Bay in 1888, the collection passed, in time, to his brother Robert (who was a medalist in the 1896 Olympic Games held in Athens), and then in 1919 to another brother, Ambassador John Work Garrett. The latter added to the collection until his death in 1942, after which it became the property of the University, as did Evergreen House, the Garrett family mansion on North Charles Street.



T. Harrison Garrett's specimen of the Columbia and Washington medal, earlier in W.E. Woodward's 69th Sale, Woodward's Personal Collection, October 13-18, 1884, Lot 459. (Garrett Collection, Part IV, 1981, Lot 1960; to John W. Adams; later sold to the author)

While I did the lion's share of cataloguing for Sales I, II, and III of the Garrett Collection, comprising colonial and early American coins, federal coins, patterns, and related issues, most of the tokens and medals were described by Dr. George J. Fuld, the distinguished numismatist who at that time was part of our company.

Among the medals in the Garrett Collection was one offered as Lot 1960 in Sale IV, held in 1981. Up to that time, although I had read about this medal extensively (but had not been aware of the 1846 discourse from *Hunt's* quoted above), I had never owned or catalogued one. Now, T. Harrison Garrett's specimen was at hand and, moreover, it was pedigreed to the personal collection of well-known nineteenth-century dealer W. Elliot Woodward, who had offered it for sale at auction in 1884. This particular piece had been off the market for nearly a century! To me, it was a dream come true to be able to handle such a distinguished item of numismatic Americana, and I thought it important to give the piece, valued at a couple thousand dollars at most (although it later brought more), "full play" in the catalogue. However, the description was sparse compared to the present description of this favorite "adventure."

Ted Craige's Fascination

An interesting commentary concerning this medal was contributed by John J. Ford Jr. as part of his foreword to my 1979 book, *Adventures With Rare Coins*, this reaching print two years before our Garrett Collection offering. Ford was discussing the late Ted Craige, who had advanced from a "Lincoln penny collector" to a connoisseur of numismatic Americana:

> Ted Craige was once offered a specimen of the extraordinarily rare *Washington* and *Columbia* medal. It fascinated him, and after establishing what it was, he located a book titled *Voyages of the Columbia to the Northwest Coast 1787-1790 and 1790-1793* by F.W. Howay.
>
> Early on, he and I discovered that the particular piece he had been offered was spurious, a cast copy, but Ted read the book from cover to cover (all 518 pages) anyway. Once he got started, he couldn't stop. Once he completed the book he couldn't bear to part with it; it just had to be in his library. He even wanted to keep the fake medal, but this price prohibited it.
>
> His enthusiasm grew as he researched the origin of the medal, the controversy concerning the diesinker, the purpose of issue, and other details. To my knowledge, he never owned a genuine specimen of this rare medal, but he certainly knew as much about it as any numismatist of my acquaintance.

More about Fur Trading

Continuing the story of fur trading in the Pacific Northwest, from *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine and Commercial Review*, 1846:[1]

> ### 1801 and Later
>
> In 1801, the trade was most extensively, though not most profitably prosecuted; that year, there were 15 vessels on the coast, and in 1802 more than 15,000 sea-

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[1] Subtitles and footnotes added.

otter skins were collected, and carried to Canton. But the competition was so great, that few of the voyages were then profitable, and some were ruinous. Subsequently, the war with Great Britain interrupted the trade for a time; but after the peace in 1815, it was resumed, and flourished for some years. The difficulties and uncertainty in procuring furs became so serious, that in 1829 the business north of California was abandoned.

Besides the 15,000 skins collected by American trades in 1802, probably the Russians obtained 10,000 the same year within their hunting limits, making an aggregate of 25,000 in one season. Mr. Sturgis said he had personally collected 6,000 in a single voyage, and he once purchased 560 prime quality in half a day. At the present time, the whole amount collected annually within the same limits does not exceed 200, and those of very ordinary quality.

The commercial value of the sea-otter skin, like other commodities, has varied with the changes in the relation of supply and demand.

The narrative of Cook's voyage shows the value of a prime skin to have been, at the time of that voyage, $120. In 1802, when the largest collection was made, the average price of large and small skins, at Canton, was only about $20 each. At the present time, those of first quality would sell readily at $150. Some seventy or eighty ordinary California skins, brought home a few months ago, were sold here at nearly $60 each, to send to the north of Europe.

Trade by Barter Only

Mr. Sturgis said the trade on the coast was altogether a barter trade. It consisted in part of blankets, coarse cloths, great-coats, fire-arms and ammunition, rice, molasses, and biscuit, coarse cottons, cutlery, and hard-ware, a great variety of trinkets, &c.; in fact, everything that one can imagine. Copper has long been known, and highly prized by the Indians. The lecturer observed that he had seen pieces of virgin copper among different tribes, that weighed 50 or 60 pounds each. It was put to no use, but still was considered very valuable, and a person having a few pieces was deemed a wealthy man.

The natives had no currency. But the skin of the ermine, found in limited numbers upon the northern part of the continent, was held in such universal estimation, and of such uniform value, among many tribes, that it in a measure supplied the place of currency. The skin of this little slender animal is from eight to twelve inches in length, perfectly white, except the tip of the tail, which is jet black.

Trader Sturgis

Urged by some Indian friends, in 1802, Mr. Sturgis obtained and sent home a fine specimen, with a request that a quantity should be ordered at the annual Leipsic fair, where he supposed they might be obtained.[1] About 5,000 were procured, which he took out with him on the next voyage, and arrived at Kigarnee, one of the principal trading places on the coast, early in 1804. Having previously encouraged the Indians to expect them, the first question was, if he had "clicks," (the Indian name for the ermine skin) for sale, and being answered in the affirmative, great earnestness was manifested to obtain them, and it was on that occasion that he purchased 560 prime sea-otter skins, at the time worth $50 apiece at Canton, in a single forenoon, giving for each five ermine skins, that cost less than thirty cents each in Boston. He succeeded in disposing of all his ermines at the same rate, before others carried them out—but in less than two years from that time, one hundred of them would not bring a sea-otter skin.

Among a portion of the Indians, the management of trade is entrusted to the women. The reason given by the men was, that women could talk with the white men better than they could, and were willing to talk more.

Trading Techniques

When the natives had a number of skins for sale, it was usual to fix a price for those of the first quality as a standard, which required a great deal of haggling. In addition to the staple articles of blankets, or cloth, or muskets, &c., that constituted this price, several smaller articles were given as presents, nominally, but in reality formed part of the price. Of these small articles, different individuals would require a different assortment: a system of equivalents was accordingly established. For instance, an iron pot and an axe were held to be of equal value—so of a knife and a file, a pocket looking-glass and a pair of scissors.

Mr. Sturgis next alluded to the various efforts made by the Indians to obtain a more valuable article than the established equivalent. To avoid trouble, which would certainly follow if he yielded in a single instance, he said he had found it necessary to waste hours in a contest with a woman about articles of no greater value than a skein of thread or a sewing-needle. From various causes, the northwest trade was liable to great fluctuations. The laws of supply and demand were frequently disregarded, and prices consequently often unsettled. He had seen prime sea-otter skins obtained for articles that did not cost fifty cents at home, and had seen given for them articles that cost here nearly twice as much as the skins would sell for in China.

Reality vs. Expectations

To secure success with any branch of business, it must be undertaken with intelligence, and steadily prosecuted. Men of sanguine temperaments are often led by reports of great profits made by others, to engage in a business of which they are ignorant, or have not adequate means to carry it on, and thus involve themselves in loss or ruin. These truths Mr. Sturgis deemed strikingly illustrated by the northwest trade.

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[1] Each year Leipzig (in Germany) was the center of fairs and exhibitions which featured commercial products from all over Europe. Buyers established or furthered connections there.

While most of those who have rushed into this trade without knowledge, experience, or sufficient capital to carry it on have been subjected to such serious losses, they were compelled to abandon it; to all who pursued it systematically and perseveringly, for a series of years, it proved highly lucrative. Among those who were the most successful in this trade, were the late firm of J. & T.H. Perkins, J. & Thos. Lamb, Edward Dorr & Sons, Boardman & Pope, Geo. W. Lyman, Wm. H. Boardman, the late Theodore Lyman, and several others, each of whom acquired a very ample fortune.

These fortunes were not acquired, as individual wealth not infrequently is, at the expense of our own community, by a tax upon the whole body of consumers, in the form of enhanced prices, often from adventitious causes. They were obtained abroad by giving to the Indians articles which they valued more than their furs, and them selling those furs to the Chinese for such prices as they are willing to pay; thus adding to the wealth of the country, at the expense of foreigners, all that was acquired by individuals beyond the usual return for the use of capital, and suitable compensation for the services of those employed. This excess was sometimes very large. Mr. Sturgis said that more than once he had known a capital of $40,000, employed in a northwest voyage, yield a return exceeding $150,000. In one instance, an outfit not exceeding $50,000, gave a gross return of $284,000. The individual who conducted the voyage is now a prominent merchant of Boston.

The Russian American Company

In conclusion, the lecturer gave a brief account of the two great fur companies. In 1785 an association of merchants was formed in Siberia for the purpose of collecting furs in the North Pacific. In 1799 they were chartered under the name of the "Russian American Company," with the exclusive privilege of procuring furs within Russian limits (54°40′) for a period of twenty years, which has since been extended.

The furs collected are sent across Siberia to Kiatska, the great mart for peltries in the northern part of China, or to St. Petersburg. For a number of years the company obtained a large portion of their supplies from American vessels, giving in return seal-skins and other furs, and latterly, bills on St. Petersburg.

The treatment of the agents and servants of the company, to the Indians, has been of the most atrocious and revolting character.

The Hudson's Bay and North West Companies

The British Hudson's Bay Company was chartered by Charles II, with the grant of the exclusive use and control of a very extensive though not well-defined country, north and west of Canada. This uncertainty as to limits, led to the formation of an association of merchants in Canada in 1787, called the "Northwest Company," for carrying on the fur trade without the supposed boundaries of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Those in the service of these concerns soon came in collision. Disputes and personal violence followed. At length, in June, 1816, a pitched battle was fought near a settlement that had been made by Lord Selkirk, upon the Red river, under a grant by the Hudson's Bay Company, between the settlers and a party in the service of the Northwest Company, in which Governor Semple and 17 of his men were killed.

This roused the attention of the British government, and in 1821, the two companies were united, or rather, the Northwest Company was merged into the Hudson's Bay Company. Previous to this, however, the Northwest Company had, in 1806, established trading posts beyond the Rocky Mountains. During the last war with Great Britain, they got possession of Mr. Astor's settlement at the mouth of the Columbia, and extended their posts on several branches of that river. These establishments being united, it infused new life, and their operations have since been conducted with increased vigor. They have now, practically, a monopoly of the fur trade, from 42° to 54° 40', on the western sea-board, and from 49° to the Northern Ocean, upon the rest of the American continent.

With the exception of the British East India Company, the Hudson's Bay Company is the most extensive and powerful association of individuals for private emolument, now in existence, and their influence has hitherto prevented an adjustment of the Oregon question. Mr. Sturgis said he did not speak from mere conjecture, when he affirmed that it would have been settled months ago, upon the line suggested by him in a previous lecture before this association, and to the satisfaction of the people of both countries, but for the selfish interference of this company. Should disastrous consequences follow the delay in settling this question, it will add another to the numerous evils that have already resulted from great commercial monopolies.

In Conclusion

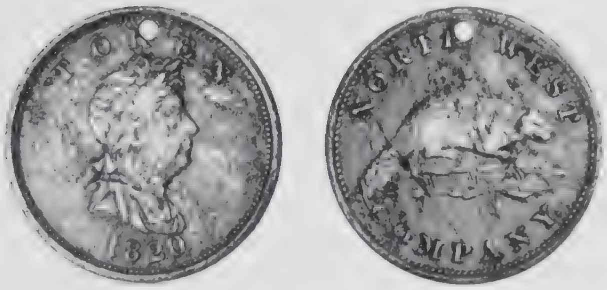
The whole business of collecting furs upon our western continent, without the acknowledged limits of the United States, is now monopolized by two great corporations, the Russian and British Fur Companies.

After the peace in 1815, the British Northwest Company—partly in consequence of the monopoly of the East India Company—were compelled to seek the aid of American merchants and American vessels, in carrying on an important branch of their business. For a number of years, all the supplies for British establishments, west of the Rocky Mountains, were brought from London to Boston, and carried hence to the mouth of the Columbia in American ships, and all their collections of furs sent to Canton, consigned to an American house, and the proceeds shipped to England or the United States, in the same vessels; a fact which speaks loudly in favor of the freedom of our institu-

> tions and the enterprise of our merchants. Our respected fellow citizens, Messrs. Perkins & Co., furnished the ships, and transacted the business.
>
> We may state, on the authority of Mr. Cowdin, that the lecture was listened to with unbroken attention and merited approbation, by a numerous and highly intelligent audience. Very many of the most prominent merchants and distinguished citizens of Boston were in attendance, among whom was the venerable Thomas H. Perkins. As a matter of "unwritten history," the lecture is indeed very valuable—inasmuch as it imparts a knowledge of the commercial enterprise of by-gone days, interesting in a high degree, and not accessible in any other form. In fact, it was just what a lecture should be-the result of large experience and practical wisdom, set forth in a clear, methodical, and comprehensive manner.
>
> It is to be regretted that more of our prominent merchants are not brought forward in this capacity, for it is from them that the younger branches of the mercantile community derive their best lessons of the duties and responsibilities of commercial life.

The North West Company

The 1820 Brass Token



A classic among early numismatic issues relating to the Oregon Territory is the brass token dated 1820, issued by the aforementioned Northwest Company (spelled North West Company on the tokens) for use in the fur trade in the Pacific Northwest, especially the present-day states of Oregon and Washington and, to the north, British Columbia.

The obverse bears the image of King George IV of England; the reverse a beaver. Nearly all tokens are holed to facilitate their being stored on strings. These pieces may have been made by John Walker & Company, or by Cotterhill, Hill & Company, both of which firms were located in England. Tokens were given to Native Americans and other trappers in exchange for beaver pelts. At any time they could be redeemed for merchandise at company trading posts.

The following account was printed in 1840 and told of the end of the North West Company, a slightly different telling from the later (1846) account above:[1]

> The mercantile rivalry of the two great British corporations, the Northwest and the Hudson's Bay Company, which had been long strengthening, now began to rage in the wilderness, and in 1814 had broken out into actual war. A colony of Scotch highlanders had been established upon the Red River[2] by Lord Selkirk, in virtue of a grant of the country from the Hudson's Bay Company. On the other hand, the Northwest Company denied the validity of that grant, and it was of great injury to the last-named body, as their posts had been almost entirely supplied from the Red River lands.
>
> In consequence, numerous acts of violence ensued, and in 1814 the Scotchmen were driven away, their houses demolished, and the colony subverted. It was re-established, however, during the following year when the hostilities were renewed, the posts retaken and burned. On the 19th of June, 1816, a more formidable battle was fought between the rival traders; the Scotchmen were routed, and their governor,
>
> Temple, and five others, were killed. These facts having been brought before the British Parliament, an act was passed on the 2d of July, 1821, uniting the two companies by the name of The Hudson's Bay Company, under a charter giving to them the privilege of trading in the Indian territory claimed or belonging to Great Britain for the period of 21 years....
>
> The system of the Hudson's Bay Company is one calculated to further the exercise of its despotic power.... The trade of this company at the west is prosecuted by a resident governor, agents, factors, and clerks, some of whom have a share in the profits of the trade; also by a more active class of agents, the hunters, voyageurs,[3] and trappers, consisting of French Canadians, half-breeds, and Indians, who are paid a small salary with the promises of future advancement according as they shall render themselves of value to the trade. They are allowed only a small share of miserable food, and are kept by promises in a state of entire subjection to the will of the company. The furs which are collected are procured mainly from the Indians, in exchange for manufactured goods, which are imported into the country free of duty....

Although the North West Company was merged into the Hudson's Bay Company in 1821, it is probable that the tokens were used for a number of years thereafter. Most extant specimens show signs of extensive wear.

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[1] "The American Fur Trade," *Merchants' Magazine and Commercial Review*, New York, 1840, Vol. III, pp. 199-200.

[2] Now in Manitoba, Canada.

[3] Voyageur: Traveling (often by canoe) fur-gathering agent, woodsman, and trader who visited various remote sites. A voyageur is depicted as part of a standard reverse design on many Canadian silver dollars from the 1930s onward.

North West Co. Tokens and Numismatics

By the late nineteenth century the North West Company tokens were considered to be rare and were of special interest to those collecting numismatic specimens of Canada. In 1894, P.N. Breton, in his landmark book, *Illustrated History of Coins and Tokens Relating to Canada*, illustrated the piece as his No. 925 and commented:

> The North-West Company was organized in Montreal about the year 1785. It carried on operations until about 1821 in the district south and west of Hudson Bay. This coin was good for a beaver skin. It is now very rare, not over five or six specimens being known, of which four are to be found in the collections of Mr. Thomas Wilson of Clarence, Ontario;[1] Rev. Father Michaud, C.S.V., of Montreal; Mr. W. Bastian, also of Montreal; the last one in the Ottawa government's collection.

In the twentieth century, several caches of North West Company tokens came to light in the Columbia River and Umpqua River valleys, including 26 highly oxidized tokens unearthed with a copper kettle (which had contained the pieces) and a skull in a burial mound along the Umpqua River near the coast in central Oregon. Twenty two of these were consigned to the writer's company and were sold to collectors.[2] Concerning the other four pieces in the find, one was donated to a museum, and three were so extensively corroded that their edges were crumbling.

Other hoards of North West Company tokens have been variously reported. One consisting of 14 pieces is currently in a western museum. Others have been exhumed from the ruins of western forts, including two pieces shown by Steve Bibler at the October 28, 1954, meeting of the Seattle Coin Club, which were excavated at the site of Fort Vancouver. A few years ago California dealer Henry Garrett acquired and disposed of a small group. The finest of these was an oxidized specimen in about Extremely Fine grade. The majority of authentic examples known today range from Very Good to Very Fine grade, are holed at the top, and are extensively oxidized. As noted, such pieces seem to have circulated for at least several years after 1820.

The Fort Vancouver Half Dollar

The Territory in the 1820s and 1830s

For many years Fort Vancouver, established by Dr. John McLoughlin for the Hudson's Bay Company in 1825, was the trading center for a large district within the Oregon Territory. McLoughlin, a physician by training, became associated with the North West Company and in 1821 participated in the aforementioned merger. Located on the north side of the Columbia River in what is present-day Washington state, the land was remote in geography and access from the East, and settlers had to be self-sufficient for extended periods of time.

In 1833 to 1834, Philip L. Edwards, a Missouri schoolteacher, taught students in Champoeg, Oregon Territory. In 1838 he went back to the East in order to encourage emigration to Oregon, which at the time was jointly controlled by the United States and Great Britain. Interested in the development of the area, Edwards furnished a report to the federal government as to conditions there. In 1842 his *Sketch of the Oregon Territory or, Emigrants' Guide* was printed at the office of the *Herald* newspaper in Liberty, Missouri. Circulation must have been limited, for but one original copy can be accounted for today.[3]

Edwards advised readers that the preferred way to travel was by horseback or mules. Concerning wagons, he felt that they might be an aid for women and children, but after about the first two-thirds of the trip they must of necessity be abandoned, as the terrain was so rough that "in many places it would be very difficult, perhaps impossible, to get them along *empty*."[4]

He estimated that a properly prepared expedition, if traveling quickly and efficiently, would take about five months to reach Fort Vancouver. The fortified outpost served effectively as the center of trading and protection for about 1,000 white settlers who transacted with approximately 100,000 Indians in the territory. McLoughlin set all of the rules for the fort and governed it with an iron hand.

Advice to Emigrants

During the mid- and late 1840s often easterners sought to improve their fortunes by emigrating to the area, often going along the route that became known as the Oregon Trail. In 1842, Dr. McLoughlin, founder of Fort Vancouver, established Oregon City in the same district. At Oregon City later in the decade, in 1849, gold $5 and $10 coins were struck from gold brought from California—perhaps potential subjects for yet other "adventures" in any sequel that may be written to the present book.

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[1] Thomas Wilson's collection was later purchased *en bloc* by William W.C. Wilson, of Montreal, whose cabinet was auctioned by Wayte Raymond in 1925; some of its rarities later were in the Norweb Collection sold in 1996 (the catalogue of which recites biographies of both Wilsons).

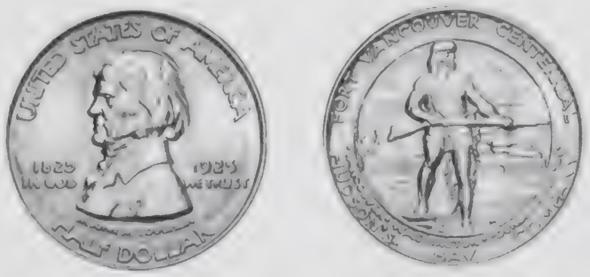
[2] Via a listing in *Rare Coin Review* No. 31, 1978, p. 11.

[3] The unique example is in the W.R. Coe Collection in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut.

[4] Edwards, p. 4.

In his 1842 booklet for would-be emigrants to the Oregon Territory, Philip L. Edwards continued with this advice:[1]

> It is always necessary to start [from Missouri or a similar location] with provisions enough to last until you reach the buffalo; from our town, say one month's regular travel. I should always advise a company to start with a good supply of cattle. It is easier to drive them than to pack other provisions, and, besides, fresh meat is greatly to be preferred. I will also state that I should never desire a company of more than 100 to 150 persons, though a goodly proportion of these were women and children. Such companies advance more rapidly, and incur less inconvenience for want of food and pasturage. A company of this character should be large enough to insure safety with proper vigilance, and all beyond this is unnecessary, and worse than useless.
>
> I would also advise emigrants to encumber themselves with little more than they will need for the journey. It is frequently asked by those who intend going into the country, "What will I need when I arrive there?" This question admits but one safe and sensible answer. You will need every thing there that you would need here in the same pursuits. But what proportion of all this can be taken across the mountains? The answer is, comparatively nothing. Then we must resort to other means of supplying a colony in the Oregon with necessaries. As yet, the Hudson's Bay Company have liberally supplied the infant settlement. But, I am not prepared to say what stress may be placed either upon their disposition or immediate ability to supply a great number of emigrants....
>
> To think of transporting the implements of agriculture and mechanics across the Rocky Mountains is utterly preposterous; and the Hudson's Bay Company, if willing, might not be able to supply the wants of a great number, unless previously advised that there would be such an increased demand.



Fort Vancouver commemorative half dollar minted in San Francisco in 1925. Someone forgot to add the requisite "S" mintmark to the die, a curious error. Although sales of 50,000 had been anticipated, only 14,966 were eventually distributed. Most of the others went to the melting pot—also the fate of many other commemorative half dollars of the first half of the twentieth century.

Edwards went on to say that a better plan would be to make arrangements long in advance for goods to be shipped by sailing vessel from the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) to the mouth of the Columbia River, one-way voyage of about two weeks, and for other freight to be shipped by water from Missouri....[2]

Further:

> There was, when I left, no gold or silver in the Territory. Peltries constituted the circulating medium, an otter skin passing at 10 and a beaver skin at 11 shillings, Halifax; and for small change, beads answered a very happy purpose. Fur skins, at these rates, commanded goods at 50% advance on the London invoice prices. Here there are no inflations and contractions in monetary affairs.[3]

A New Commemorative

On February 24, 1925 as part of the same legislation that made possible the California Diamond Jubilee[4] and Vermont-Bennington halves, the 1925 Fort Vancouver Centennial half dollar was authorized by Congress. The story of this coin fits in nicely with the earlier-quoted account and brings the fur trade scene a few decades further forward.

Moreover, from a numismatic viewpoint, the 1787 *Columbia* and *Washington* medal is all but impossible to obtain, and the 1820 North West token is quite rare. In contrast, the Fort Vancouver coin is within the reach of just about every serious collector. Still further, anyone setting "Mint State" as a grade objective might as well forget the 1787 and 1820 pieces, but for the Fort Vancouver half dollar they are in luck—for most are found this way.

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[1] *Ibid* p. 5.

[2] Although Edwards did not discuss the route, this would have been down the Mississippi to New Orleans, then by a sailing vessel around Cape Horn at the lower reaches of South America, continuing up the Pacific Coast.

[3] British shillings (minted in London) circulating in the Oregon Territory were reckoned as to their value in distant Halifax, Nova Scotia, which was under British rule. Years later in 1858, when the first decimal coins were issued by the Province of Canada, the silver twenty-cent piece was traded at par with the Halifax shilling, although there was some objection to this as many thought the Halifax shilling was worth closer to 25¢. From this and the Edwards narrative it can be assumed that the value of an 1820 North West Co. beaver token, worth one beaver skin, would have been worth about $2.50 at the time, or about equivalent to an American quarter eagle.

[4] Also see B. Max Mehl's comment about the California coin under Adventure No. 40.

Fort Vancouver in Washington, as well as Vancouver Island and Vancouver, the capital of British Columbia, took their names from Captain George Vancouver (1758-1798), who sailed with Captain James Cook on his first and second voyages. After Cook's death the British admiralty gave him command of the *Discovery*, aboard which ship he explored the Pacific Northwest Coast of North America, first arriving there on April 18, 1792. His travels were chronicled in a book published in 1798, *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean and Round the World in 1790-5*.

In numismatics, one inquiry often suggests another, and before long many different coins, medals, and tokens can be linked by common threads of history. Thus, in addition to the aforementioned 1849 Oregon $5 and $10 coins, other items relevant to the present discussion include the series of 1926-1939 Oregon Trail commemorative half dollars (13 date and mintmark varieties in all) and, for good measure, and the 1928 Hawaiian half dollar, which depicts Captain James Cook on the obverse.

Design and Production

The 1925 commemorative coin project was handled by the Fort Vancouver Centennial Corporation, which intended to use the proceeds to help fund Centennial events. Sidney Bell, a Portland artist, was selected to prepare designs for the half dollar. The portrait of McLoughlin was taken from a sketch by John T. Urquhart. The local committee liked Bell's work, but the Commission of Fine Arts, a group intended to advise and sometimes consent to proposals, rejected it as unsatisfactory. Laura Gardin Fraser, who by this time was familiar with commemoratives (having designed the 1921 Alabama and 1922 Grant coins), revised the motifs and completed the models from which dies were made. Fraser's husband, James Earle Fraser, is numismatically remembered as the designer of the 1913 Buffalo nickel, among other accomplishments.

The obverse of the new commemorative half dollar depicted a bust of McLoughlin, whereas the reverse showed a pioneer (specifically a trapper, per original correspondence with the Commission of Fine Arts), standing with gun in hand, with the Fort Vancouver stockade in the background, set against Mt. Hood and the Columbia River. Around the rim of the coin appeared the inscriptions FORT VANCOUVER CENTENNIAL and HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.

Although up to 300,000 pieces were authorized, coinage was cautious, and by August 1, 1925, only 50,028 had been struck at the San Francisco Mint. By error the S mintmark was omitted. As part of the publicity the entire shipment of half dollars, weighing 1,462 pounds (including packing material), was flown by air from San Francisco to Vancouver on August 1st. These were put up in cloth bags of 1,000 coins, each sack of which tipped the scale at about 28 pounds.

An Account of the Delivery

The *Oregon Sunday Journal*, Portland, Oregon, August 2, 1925, contained the following article, "To San Francisco and Back in 11 Hours." The byline noted it was "by Donald Sterling, managing editor of the *Journal*, who accompanied Lieutenant Oakley G. Kelly, U.S.A., on a round-trip air flight to San Francisco Saturday [August 1, 1925]." The text is excerpted herewith:[1]

> ### A Round-Trip Flight
>
> From Vancouver, Washington, to San Francisco and return, a distance of 1,100 miles, in 10 hours and 55 minutes flying time, was a feat accomplished Saturday by Lieutenant Oakley G. Kelly, U.S.A., in command of the air squadron at Pearson Field, Vancouver barracks, in the first round trip airplane flight to the Bay City to be made in a single day. The purpose of the flight was to receive a consignment of newly-coined 50-cent pieces from the United States Mint at San Francisco designed to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the founding of Fort Vancouver. On its face the new half dollar bears a likeness of Dr. John McLoughlin. On the reverse side is the figure of a Hudson's Bay trapper.
>
> Breakfast in Portland, lunch in San Francisco and dinner in Portland was the order of the day for Lieutenant Kelly and his passenger. With less ado than the average citizen makes in backing the family flivver from the garage on a morning, Kelly drove his huge DeHavilland plane, which is equipped with a 12-cylinder engine, from its hangar shortly after 5 o'clock. He and his passenger climbed aboard, the engine was started and at 5:15 a.m. the machine soared from Pearson field and sailed southward. Eugene, 110 miles away by air, was reached at 6:15 and a stop of 20 minutes taken for gas.
>
> Although the plane's capacity is 100 gallons, Lieutenant Kelly wanted to make sure he had sufficient fuel to reach San Francisco. At 7:45 the fliers passed over Medford, at 9:15 a.m. over Redding, California, and alighted at Crissey field, the Presidio,[2] at 11:20 a.m., an elapsed time of six hours and flying time of five hours 45 minutes.

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[1] The son of the newspaper writer, Donald Sterling, Jr., furnished this clipping to the author. • Subtitles added. Arranged chronologically.

[2] Old Spanish fort on San Francisco Bay.

Stowing the Half Dollars Aboard

George Young of the American Bank of San Francisco, among others, was awaiting the arrival of the plane at Crissey field, having in his possession the Centennial half dollars. Lieutenant Kelly receipted for them, stowed them away and while the pilot and his passenger partook of a quick luncheon, the machine was refueled for the return trip.

Lieutenant Kelly took off from Crissey field at 12:45 p.m., passed over Williams, California at 1:45 p.m., Redding at 2:20 p.m., Pilot Rock, which approximates the California-Oregon state line, at 3:15 p.m., Roseburg at 4:15, and Eugene at 4:50, where a stop of 20 minutes was made for refueling.

Back in Vancouver

The flight from Eugene was resumed at 5:10 and the plane alighted on Pearson field, Vancouver barracks, at 6:15 p.m. As a courtesy to *The Oregon Journal* and to the Vancouver Centennial, Lieutenant Kelly circled the *Journal* building at Portland and the central business district of Vancouver on his return.

Upon Kelly's return the coins were received with due ceremony at Pearson field by Herbert Campbell of the *Vancouver Columbian*, president of the centennial which will be held August 17 to 23. The first coin was presented to Lieutenant Kelly. Others receiving them were Mayor N.E. Allen, Councilman O.W. Stone, Campbell and the writer.

This is only one of another long list of air achievements attaching to the credit of Lieutenant Kelly, who has the distinction of being one of the two pilots who made the first non-stop transcontinental flight in May 1923, when they flew more than 2,600 miles in 26 hours. Since assigned to duty at Pearson field, Lieutenant Kelly has made many flights up and down the coast and into the interior. But the novelty of Saturday's jaunt was the round trip feature. On a previous occasion he had flown from Los Angeles to Portland in a single day.

Varying altitudes and speeds were attained by Lieutenant Kelly, depending on the air conditions and the nature of the country. Throughout the Willamette Valley, going and coming, the average altitude was 1,000 feet; over the rugged regions of Douglas and Josephine counties, and over the Siskiyous an elevation of between 3,000 and 6,000 was maintained for many miles. On the return trip the pilot covered the first 300 miles in 150 minutes, maintaining an average speed of 120 miles an hour.

Going down, a headwind was encountered south of Roseburg, this condition being aggravated during the last leg of the route by the accustomed fog that pervades the Bay district. The return trip, however, was with a favorable wind, which accounts for the fact that the return was made in 35 minutes less time than the outgoing trip.... The age of speed is here, adding as it does to the complexities of life, and the achievement of the air service is only another answer to the irresistible challenge that nature makes to restive man.

Among the photographs accompanying the article was one bearing this caption: "Lieutenant Kelly smiles as Herbert Campbell, president of the Vancouver Centennial, pours out the memorial coins which Kelly delivered into the waiting hands of H.G. Warren, vice president of the Vancouver National Bank."

Sales of the Vancouver Half Dollars

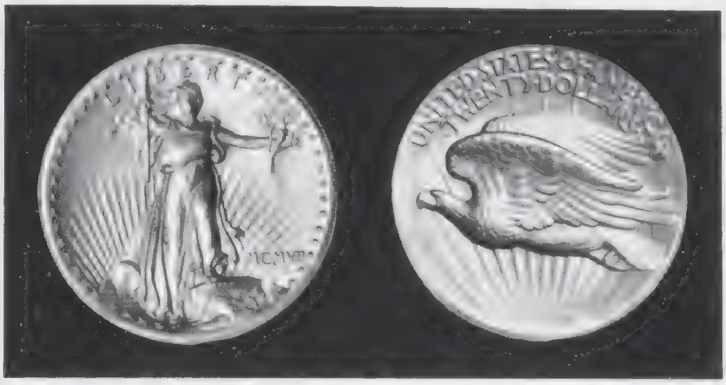
Sales were effected at $1 per coin throughout August and September 1925, including the week-long Fort Vancouver Centennial celebration, which began on August 17th.

Sales fell far short of expectations, and 35,034 coins were returned to the San Francisco Mint to be melted, leaving a net figure of 14,966 distributed plus 28 reserved for the Assay Commission. While numismatists and the ever-active B. Max Mehl undoubtedly bought several thousand pieces, most went into the hands of the public. The issue soon sold at a premium on the numismatic market, and in 1928-1929 sales were reported as high as $10 per coin. However, by 1930 the price had slipped back to the $6-$7 level. Time vindicates most if not all buying decisions in American numismatics, and today a nice specimen costs several hundred dollars. As noted, it is the only one of this story's "trio of adventure coins" that can be obtained easily. No doubt, the best part of 10,000 exist—scattered in almost as many collections and other locations.

ADVENTURE NO. 32

TEDDY ROOSEVELT'S "PET CRIME": THE MCMVII $20

Saint-Gaudens' Masterpiece



The MCMVII double eagle, released in December 1907, represented the artistry of America's most famous sculptor, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, working closely with President Roosevelt , who desired to improve the artistic quality of coinage. It developed that the high relief, almost sculptured details, of the new $20 made it difficult to strike these pieces on high-speed presses. Thus, after only 11,250 were made, the design was modified to a shallower relief. The Roman numerals were discontinued, and the Arabic form of 1907 was employed.

This short-lived MCMVII style quickly became a collectors' favorite, and from the outset they were in strong demand. Today, the several thousand remaining pieces are highly desired when they appear on the market, as they do with regularity.

Art in Numismatics

The MCMVII (1907) double eagle, designed by Augustus Saint-Gaudens, stands today as one of the "must have" coins for many collectors.[1] Year in and year out, in surveys of popularity and artistry this golden coin has ranked high, often in the number one spot.

While the MCMVII double eagle sells for several thousand dollars or more, of the 11,250 minted enough exist today that specimens come on the market with frequency. Likely as not, just about every leading dealership is apt to have one or two pieces in stock, and the typical auction sale containing American gold coins is apt to have one or a few as well.

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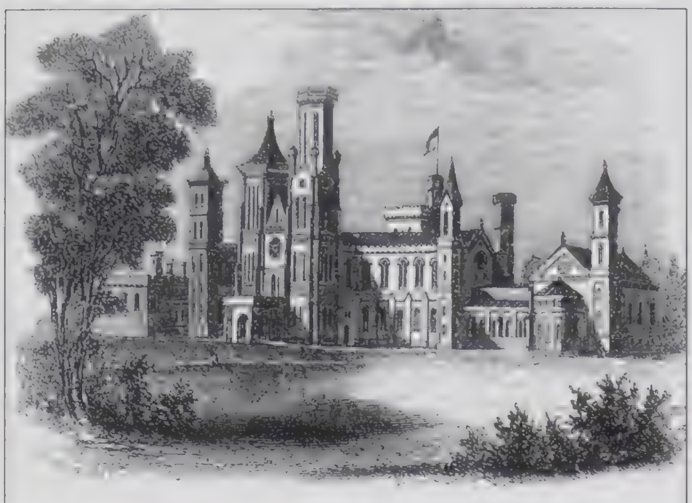
[1] Sources include Don Taxay, *U.S. Mint and Coinage*, 1966; Cornelius Vermeule, *Numismatic Art in America*, 1971; John H. Dryfhout, "The 1907 United States Gold Coinage," 1972, by the curator of the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site; David W. Akers' *United States Gold Patterns* (1975) and his study on $20 gold coins (1982); *United States Gold Coins: An Illustrated History* (Bowers, 1982); John H. Dryfhout, *The Work of Augustus Saint-Gaudens* (1982); *American Heritage*, December 1984, cover illustration; Abe Kosoff Estate Sale (Bowers and Merena, 1985); *Walter Breen's Complete Encyclopedia of U.S. and Colonial Coins* (1988); David Enders Tripp catalogue of Sotheby's sale of June 21, 1995; letter copy from Les Perline (1996); among others, including the author's visits to the Saint-Gaudens home, Aspet, in Cornish, NH. • Older and historical sources include the two-volume set of Saint-Gaudens' reminiscences; Homer Saint-Gauden's articles in *The Century* (March 1908 and April 1920); "The Later works of Augustus Saint-Gaudens" and April 1920 "Roosevelt and Our Coin Designs"; Adams-Woodin, *United States Pattern, Trial and Experimental Pieces* (American Numismatic Society, 1913); and others. Issues of *The Numismatist*, 1907-1909 in particular, contain many letters and news items. The *American Journal of Numismatics* likewise contains several items of importance.



The Smithsonian Institution on the Mall in Washington, DC. Within this castle-like building during a visit in 1904 President Theodore Roosevelt viewed and was inspired by the designs of ancient Greek coins.

Roosevelt's Interest

The new double eagle of 1907 was created through the cooperation of President Theodore Roosevelt and noted sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens in a program unprecedented in the history of American coinage.

Roosevelt enjoyed the trappings of history and art, and had a *joie de vivre* unmatched by any president up to his time. One day in 1904 he visited the Smithsonian Institution, then centered in the "Castle" which, to this day, is a cynosure on the Mall between the Capitol and the Washington Monument. There, under glass, he viewed specimens of ancient Greek coinage.

Perhaps reflecting upon a handful of pocket change, he would later (December 27, 1904) write to Leslie Mortier Shaw, his secretary of the Treasury:

> I think our coinage is artistically of atrocious hideousness. Would it be possible, without asking permission of Congress, to employ a man like Saint-Gaudens to give us a coinage that would have some beauty?

At the time Saint-Gaudens (1848-1907), who since 1885 had maintained his studio adjacent to his home, "Aspet," in Cornish, New Hampshire, in verdant hills overlooking the Connecticut River, was America's best known and most honored sculptor. He had done extensive commissions for many important projects including for the World's Columbian Exposition (Chicago, 1893), among many others. A particular point of pride was the nude *Diana* sculpted for display atop Madison Square Garden, the New York gathering place designed by his late lamented buddy and fellow-womanizer, Stanford White, of the architectural firm of McKim, Mead & White. Both White and Saint-Gaudens had an eye for things artistic and, it seems (from a recollection of a White descendant published in *New Yorker* magazine in the 1990s) young girls. Unfortunately, Pittsburgh millionaire Harry K. Thaw did not like the reminiscences of trysts revealed to him by his wife, née showgirl Evelyn Nesbit ("the girl on the red velvet swing"). She had enjoyed many secret meetings earlier with White, and in the rooftop pavilion at Madison Square Garden, Thaw killed White in 1906. Both White and Saint-Gaudens were "men about town" in New York City at the turn of the century, and both enjoyed wine, women, and song.

In Cornish, Saint-Gaudens was part of an artists' colony that included a half dozen or more artists and writers of repute, among the former being Maxfield Parrish (who in 1907 was given a specimen of the regular MCMVII High Relief $20 by the Saint-Gaudens family).[1] Each summer the group would hold amateur theatricals and otherwise enjoy the arts in bucolic surroundings.

By early 1905, Saint-Gaudens had been contacted by Roosevelt or his staff, not at first for coinage, but to help create the medal for Roosevelt's March 1905 inauguration, his first as an elected president, following his having served since President McKinley's assassination in 1901. Saint-Gaudens soon went to work, and created a new reverse featuring a standing eagle (which he would later adapt for the 1907 $10 coin).

New Designs Suggested

Meanwhile, Saint-Gaudens, who was staying at the Players' Club, New York City, had been asked about the coinage as well. On January 20, 1905, he wrote to Director of the Mint George E. Roberts in Washington:

> Your letter of January 13th addressed c/o Society of American Artists was sent to Windsor, Vermont and from there forwarded to me here two days ago.[2]
>
> I am extremely interested in the matter of the new designs for the coinage and am honored by your de-

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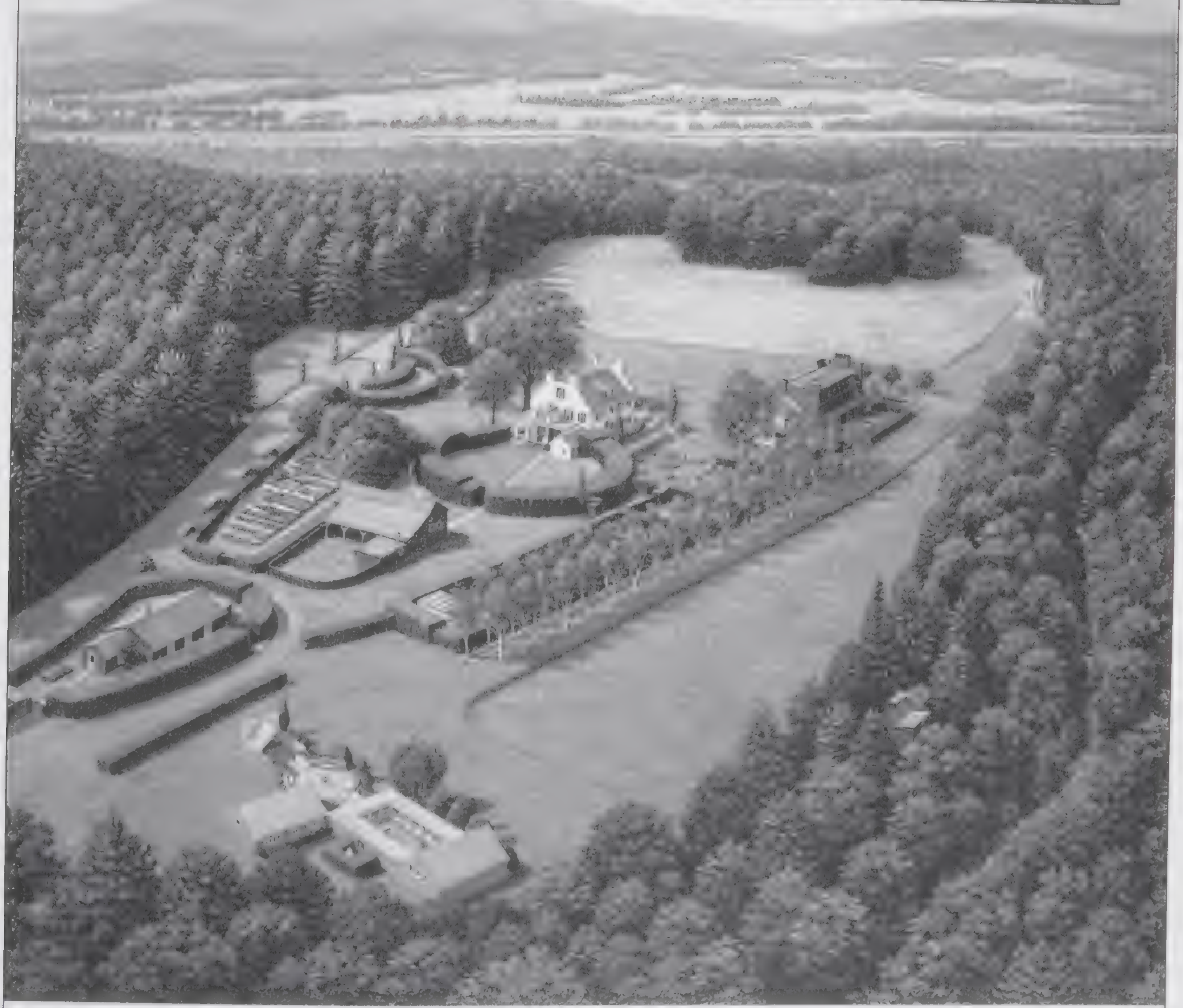
[1] In the early twentieth century the most celebrated resident of the district was not Saint-Gaudens, but was Winston Churchill (born in St. Louis, Missouri, November 10, 1871; died in Winter Park, Florida, March 12, 1947), not the British statesman, but an author of renown (*The Celebrity, Richard Carvel, The Crisis, Coniston,* and other novels) who entertained Theodore Roosevelt on a trip to Cornish (not related to the gold coin commission) and who later had President Woodrow Wilson as a guest at his home, Harlakenden, which was subsequently depicted on many postcards as "The Summer Capitol."

[2] Windsor, across the Connecticut River from Cornish, New Hampshire, is where the artist received his mail.

Augustus Saint-Gaudens' class at the Art Students League, New York City, 1888. (Courtesy, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site, Cornish, N.H., via Gregory C. Schwarz)



Bird's-eye view of the Saint-Gaudens home and grounds. Painting by L. Kenneth Townsend, 1995. (Courtesy, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site, Cornish, N.H., via Gregory C. Schwarz)

> sire that I should give thought and advice on the subject. It will I assure you give me great pleasure to assist in the procuring of good work but I shall need time for reflection and consultation with others before replying definitely and when I have come to a conclusion I will write you at once. I shall be in Washington in March and should you desire I can take up the subject with you at that time.

In due course the inaugural medals were viewed by President Roosevelt, who then wrote to the artist:

> My dear fellow. I am very grateful to you, and I am very proud to have been able to associate you with my administration. I like the medals immensely, but that goes without saying, for the work is eminently characteristic of you...
>
> Thank Heaven we have at last some artistic work of permanent worth done for the government. I don't want to slop over, but I feel just as if we suddenly imported a little of Greece of the 5th or 4th centuries B.C. into America; and I am very proud and grateful that I happen to be the beneficiary.

Roosevelt, the Artist, and the Mint

At this point in the narrative, some background might well be in order.

In the early 1890s Saint-Gaudens had accepted a commission to design a medal for the World's Columbian Exposition, scheduled to open in 1892 in Chicago to observe the 400th anniversary of Columbus' "discovery" of America, but delayed in its construction so that the doors were thrown open to the public a year late, in 1893 (see Adventure #28 for full details).

At that time, Charles E. Barber was chief engraver at the Philadelphia Mint, having inherited the post from his father, who had died in 1879. Today, the corpus of Barber's coinage is considered to be a mixed bag, but, in general, it is favorably viewed by numismatists. (It is to be recalled that beauty is always in the eye of the beholder, that the numismatically prized 1793 Chain copper cent was in its day called ugly as was the 1878 silver dollar, the latter by George T. Morgan.) Among Charles E. Barber's more familiar creations are the 1879 Flowing Hair $4 stella motif, the 1883 Liberty Head nickel, and the 1892 Liberty Head dime, quarter, and half dollar.

Notwithstanding having a fairly extensive repertoire of coinage and medallic work in place by the early 1890s, Barber's artistic reputation could not hold a candle to that of the widely acclaimed Saint-Gaudens. No love was lost between the two artists when Saint-Gaudens' design for the reverse of a 1892 Columbian Exposition medal was rejected, as was the sculptor's second design, and, finally, the third! An eagle by Chief Engraver Barber was selected in its place, to be oddly combined with Saint-Gaudens' obverse motif.

As the decade of the 1890s progressed, Barber was viewed as a bumbling idiot by much of the numismatic and artistic fraternity. An unofficial but nationally-publicized contest to improve coinage designs was held in 1895, a reaction to the current silver design. An article in *The Numismatist* pulled no punches: "All the sculptors and artists in the United States have severely criticized the existing coinage. The designs of European coins, they declare, are infinitely superior."

In the ensuing years, Saint-Gaudens went from one artistic triumph to another, while within the Engraving Department of the Philadelphia Mint, Barber seemed to have accomplished little that garnered acclaim. Thus, by 1905, probably the last thing Chief Engraver Barber wanted was to have Saint-Gaudens thrust upon him as the savior of American coinage artistry.

However, as will be related in the following paragraphs, Barber had no choice. In 1905, the New Hampshire sculptor was given a commission of $5,000 and requested by Roosevelt to redesign the *entire* American coinage from the cent to the double eagle. The scene was then set with President Roosevelt and Saint-Gaudens on one side of the battle lines, and Chief Engraver Barber on the other.

The story of the design...

New Designs Proposed

With commission in hand, the sculptor made many sketches for various issues, particularly the cent and the larger gold denominations. It was the autumn season in the hills of New Hampshire, most leaves had fallen from the trees, and following the departure of visitors, serious work could begin.

On November 6, 1905, Roosevelt wrote:

> How is that old gold coinage coming along? I want to make a suggestion. It seems to me worthwhile to try for a really good coinage, though I suppose there will be a revolt about it!
>
> I was looking at some gold coins of Alexander the Great today, and I was struck by their high relief. Would it not be well to have our coins in high relief, and also to have rims raised? The point of having the rims raised would be, of course, to protect the figure on the coin, and if we have the figures in high relief, like the figures on the old Greek coins, they will surely last longer. What do you think of this?

Saint-Gaudens replied to Roosevelt on November 11, stating that he would be pleased to follow the coinage concepts of ancient Greece, "but the authorities on modern monetary requirements would, I fear, 'throw fits,' to speak emphatically, if the thing was done now."

Further:

> It would be great if it could be accomplished, and I do not see what the objection would be if the edges were high enough to prevent rubbing. Perhaps an inquiry from you would not receive the antagonistic reply from those who have say in such matters that would certainly be made to me...

Clearly, the antagonism between Saint-Gaudens and the Mint was deep rooted. More from the same letter:

> Up to the present I have done no work on the actual models for the coins, but have made sketches, and the matter is constantly in my mind. I have about determined on the composition of one side, which would contain an eagle very much like the one I placed on your [inaugural] medal with the modification that would be advantageous.
>
> On the other side I would place (possibly winged) figure of Liberty striding energetically forward as if on a mountain top holding aloft on one arm a shield bearing the stars and stripes with the word Liberty marked across the field, in the other hand, a flaming touch. The drapery would be flowing in the breeze. My idea is to make it a living thing and typical of progress...

Thus was born the idea, at least in coinage form, of what would become in 1907 the Ultra High Relief gold double eagle.

Additional correspondence took place between the president and the sculptor. Roosevelt seconded Saint-Gaudens' idea of putting the date in Roman numerals, heretofore not utilized on United States coinage. The Mint (read Charles Barber) strongly resisted this entire procedure. Roosevelt met with Secretary of the Treasury Leslie Mortier Shaw, and on January 6, 1906, reported to Saint-Gaudens:

> I have seen Shaw about that coinage and told him that it was my pet baby. We will try it anyway, so you go ahead. Shaw was really very nice about it. Of course, he thinks I am a crack-brained lunatic on the subject, but he said with great kindness that there was always a certain number of gold coins that had to be stored up in vaults, and there was no earthly objection to having those coins as artistic as the Greeks could desire...
>
> I think it will seriously increase the mortality among the employees at the Mint at seeing such a desecration, but they will perish in a good cause!

This presidential encouragement prompted the sculptor to comment, tongue-in-cheek, on May 26, 1906:

> ...Whatever I produce cannot be worse than the inanities now displayed on our coins, and we will at least have made an attempt in the right direction, and served the country by increasing the mortality at the Mint. There is one gentleman there, however, who, when he sees what is coming, may have the 'nervous prostitution,' as termed by a native here, but killed, no. He has been in that institution since the foundation of the government and will be found standing in its ruins.

The powers of the White House notwithstanding, getting the chief engraver to like anything that Saint-Gaudens did was next to impossible. On May 28, 1906, the sculptor commented to his president-patron-protector:

> I have sent a practical man to Washington to obtain all the details necessary for the carrying out of our scheme, but if you succeed in getting the best of the polite Mr. Barber down there, or the others in charge, you will have done a greater work than putting through the Panama Canal. Nevertheless, I shall stick at it, even until death.

Cancer had taken hold in Saint-Gaudens' body, and the last sentence would prove to be very poignant. On June 28, he advised the president, "I am here on the sick list, where I have to remain in the hands of the doctors until the first of August, but my mind is on the coins." The sculptor noted that for the reverse of the $20 coin he was going to use:

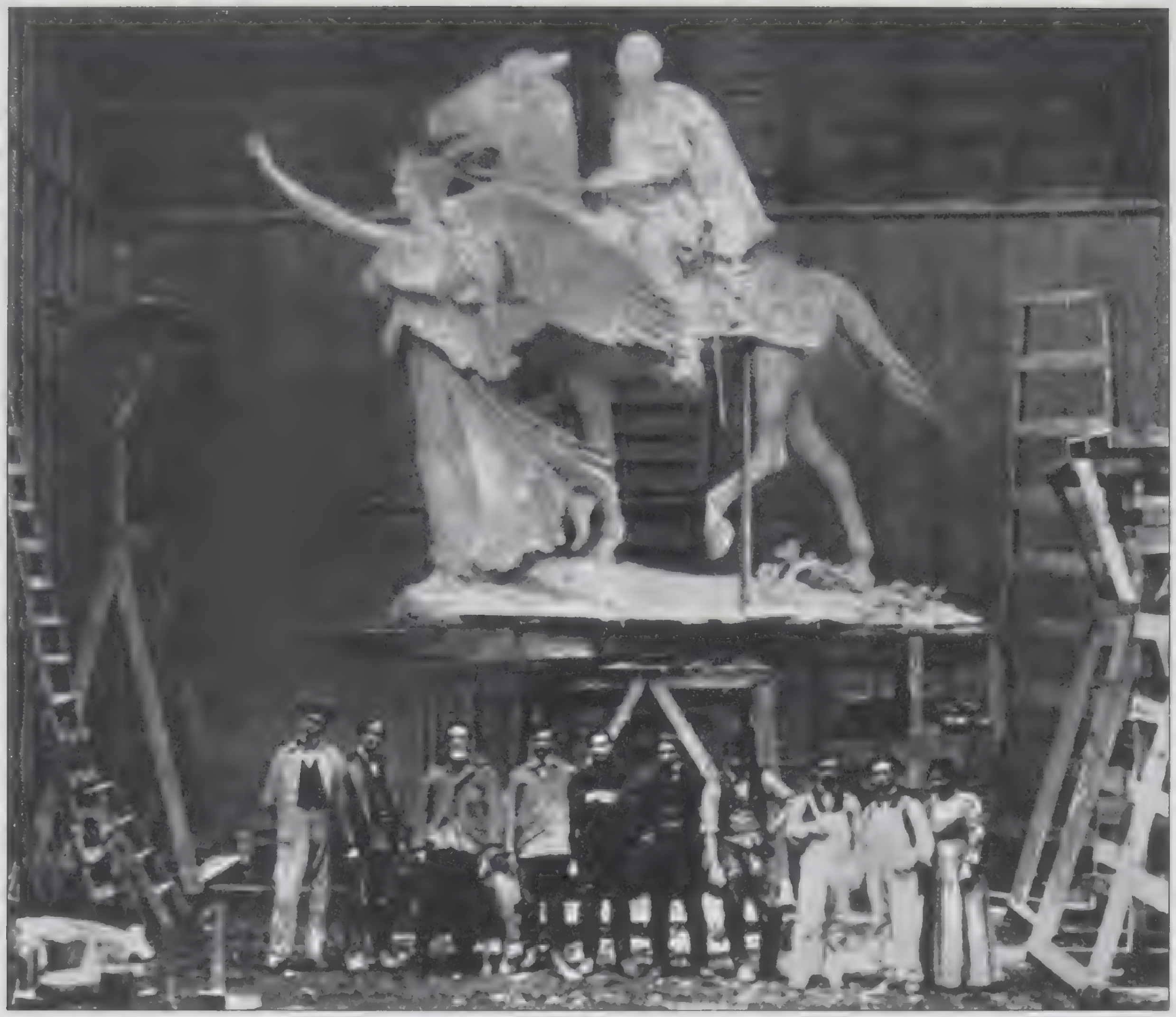
> ...a flying eagle, a modification of the device which was used on the cent of 1857. I had not seen that coin for many years, and was so impressed by it that I thought if carried out with some modification, nothing better could be done. It is by all odds the best design on any American coin.

On July 20, 1906, Roosevelt wrote to Saint-Gaudens to urge him to hurry the coinage project along, for "this summer is the best time to settle it, because I would like to do it free from all supervision by the coordinate branch." The reference was to Congress, which was on its summer recess and could not interfere. Clearly, Roosevelt was a brave and "bully" (as he himself put it) man, a person who stood up for his ideas.

The sculptor, with cancer, remained on the sick list, and, in fact, would never leave it. His energies were sapped, but he continued on. His assistant, Henry Hering (1874-1949) did much of the work preparing the models for the new coinage.

Roosevelt kept up the pressure on the Philadelphia Mint and also on the sculptor, but was receiving nothing in the way of help from the chief engraver. On September 11, 1906, a letter from Roosevelt to Secretary Shaw included this commentary:

> ...now, a word as to my pet inquiry, the coinage, which I am getting Saint-Gaudens to start. I am afraid



Completed plaster model of the *Sherman Victory* sculpture, 1901. Left to right: Hanson (?), James E. Fraser (a student of Saint-Gaudens, who later became famous in coinage as the designer of the 1913 nickel, among other productions), Augustus Saint-Gaudens, Leonard Cunelle, Henry Hering (the assistant who years later in 1907 completed Saint-Gaudens' work on the $20 gold coins), Harry Thrasher, Antonio Tonachel, unknown assistant, Charlie Wells, and Elsie Ward. (Courtesy, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site, Cornish, N.H., via Gregory C. Schwarz)

In his lifetime Saint-Gaudens' home and studio in Cornish, New Hampshire, were open to visitors. Several different postcards were issued of the facility, this one bearing a postmark of April 2, 1907, when the artist was busy at work on the MCMVII double eagle! "Alice," a visitor, was the sender.

> I shall have some difficulty with the Mint people, who are insisting that they cannot cut the coins as deep as they should be. I enclose you a specimen, and I direct that Mr. Barber have the dies made as Saint-Gaudens, with my authority, presents them. Mr. Barber is quoted as saying that they could not cut them as deep as this. We then applied to Tiffany and Gorham, the two great silversmiths and jewelers of New York. Mr. Kunz of Tiffany, and Mr. Buck of Gorham's, at once stated that their houses could without difficulty at a single stroke make a cut as deep as this.
>
> Mr. Barber must at once get into communication with Tiffany and Gorham, unless he is prepared to make such a deep impression without such consultation. Will you find out from him how long it will take, when the full casts of the coins are furnished you by Saint-Gaudens, to get out the first of the new coins—that is, the twenty dollar gold piece, which is the one I have most at heart? All I want to know from Mr. Barber is how long it will take to make them, and the cost; and if there is likely to be a long delay and seemingly too much expense. I will want him to communicate with them. I should regard it as rather a black eye for the Mint and a confession of inferiority on their part to Tiffany and Gorham. Will you communicate all of this to the Mint people?

So it was with a feeling of relief and satisfaction that Roosevelt wrote to Saint-Gaudens on December 20, 1906, after having seen the first plaster models (which had been transmitted by Henry Hering):

> Those models are simply immense—if such a slang way of talking is permissible in reference to giving a modern nation one coinage at least which shall be as good as that of the ancient Greeks. I have instructed the director of the Mint that these dies are to be reproduced as quickly as possible and just as they are. It is simply splendid. I suppose I shall be impeached for it in Congress; but I shall regard that as a very cheap payment!

The Double Eagle Project

By early 1907 the Mint had reviewed the new $20 designs several times and was now involved with the technicalities of mintage. As the coins were intended to be made in larger quantities on a high-speed, steam-powered production press, *efficiency* was the key precept. At the time the $20 circulated little except in areas of the West, and was mainly used for international monetary settlements and domestic bank reserves. And, it is to be remembered, a mint is a *coin factory*, not an artist's studio.

In February 1907 dies were prepared from the plaster models received the preceding December. Incredibly, it took nine distinct blows from a hydraulic press to bring relief up to the height required.

Given the scenario of each coin requiring nine blows from the press, and the animus triangle involving the president, the sculptor, and the Mint, progress continued to be slow, and resisted at every turn.

On March 12, 1907, Saint-Gaudens reported to Roosevelt:

> I send today to the Mint the models of the twenty-dollar gold piece with the alterations that were indispensable if the coin was to be struck with one blow. There has been no change whatever in the design. It was simply a question of the thickness of the gold in certain places, and the weight of the pressure when the blow was struck…

Today, the impressions from this second modification are not known to numismatists. However, the revisions did not help, and problems at the Mint—real as well as perceived—continued. It simply proved too much. Roosevelt wrote to Saint-Gaudens on May 8, 1907:

> I am sorry to say I am having some real difficulties in connection with the striking of those gold coins. It has proved hitherto impossible to strike them by one blow, which is necessary under the conditions of making coins at the present day. I send you a copy of letters from the head of the Department of Coins and Medals of the British Museum, and from Comparetti [Comparette, curator of the Mint Collection and a knowledgeable numismatist].
>
> I am afraid it is not practicable to have the coins made if they are struck with more than one blow. Of course I can have a few hundred of these beautiful coins made, but they will be merely souvenirs and medals, not part of the true coinage of the country. Would it be possible for you to come on to the Mint? I am sure that the Mint authorities now really desire to do whatever they can, and if it would be possible for you to go there I could arrange to have some of the Tiffany people there at the same time to see if there was anything practicable to be done…

To the letter was appended a postscript:

> You will notice what Comparetti [*sic*] says about our country leading the way. I know our people now earnestly desire to do all they can; and I believe that with a slightly altered and lowered relief (and possibly a profile figure of Liberty) we can yet do the trick.

By this time Saint-Gaudens' health had worsened, and he was beset by pressures involving other unfinished commissions. On May 11, 1907 he wrote to Roosevelt:

> I am extremely sorry that it will be wholly impossible for me to leave Windsor at present, but I am sending to Mr. Roberts, and if you so desire, to you, my assistant, Mr. Hering, who understands the mechanical requirements of the coin far better than I.

> After all the question is fairly simple, and I have not the slightest doubt that making the coins in low relief will settle the matter satisfactorily. Greatly as I should like to please you, I feel that I cannot now model another coin in profile for the twenty-dollar gold piece. Indeed, as far as I'm concerned, I should prefer seeing the head of Liberty [a reference to the Indian head design made for the $10 piece but used on at least one $20 pattern] in place of any figure of Liberty on the Twenty-dollar coin as well as on the one-cent. If the idea appeals to you, I would refine the modeling of the head now that I have seen it struck in the small, so as to bring it in scale with the eagle. I am grieved that the striking of the die did not bring better results. Evidently it is no trifling matter to make Greek art conform with modern numismatics.

The President liked the head of Liberty with its Indian headdress, but also appreciated Saint-Gaudens' standing figure, as his letter to the sculptor dated May 12, 1907, shows:

> All right. Your letter really makes me feel quite cheerful. I should be glad, if it possible for you to do so, if you would "refine" the head of Liberty; but I want to keep the figure of Liberty for at least one small issue of the coins. I look forward to seeing Mr. Hering.

The sculptor's health was failing rapidly, and his last known letter to Roosevelt prior to his death (on August 3rd) is dated May 27, 1907:

> Now that this business of coinage is coming to an end and we understand how much relief can be practically stamped, I have been looking over the other models that I have made and there is no question in my mind that the standing eagle is the best. You have seen only the large model, and probably on seeing it in the small will have a different impression. The artists all prefer it, as I do, to the flying eagle.
>
> First, in that it is more on a scale with the figure of Liberty on the other side.
>
> Second, it eliminates the sunburst which is on both sides of the coin as it will be adopted as settled up to now.
>
> Third, it is more dignified and less inclined toward the sensational.
>
> Fourth, it will occupy no more time to use this model than it will to do the other work that will be necessary, and I think it is a little more favorable for stamping.
>
> The majority of the people that I show the work to evidently prefer with you the figure Liberty to the head of Liberty and that I should not consider [the latter] any further on the twenty-dollar gold coin.

Following Saint-Gaudens' death in August, a state of confusion reigned at the Mint. Reflective of this is a letter from President Roosevelt to Secretary of the Treasury George B. Cortelyou (who was named to the post in the same year), dated August 7, 1907:

> I do not want to wait about those new coins. I would like the Director of the Mint to go ahead with the dies of the coins as they now are, and then if experience shows that the clear cut finish must be obtained, make the change in the original dies after submitting it to me. Mr. Saint-Gaudens is dead. I do not know if there is any man associated with him to whom we can refer.
>
> One of his assistants [Henry Hering] has been in communication with the Mint authorities about this matter. Why don't they get in touch with him again? I am sure there has been goodwill upon the part of the Mint authorities, but I cannot help feeling there has been a certain cumbersomeness of mind and inability to do the speediest modern work, as shown by these delays.
>
> There must be no further delays. Let the two coins be finished and put into circulation at once; by September first. Then if experience shows, or even if experience does not show, that there should be a sharper outline, let the Mint authorities consult with the late Saint-Gaudens' assistant and prepare dies of a sharper cutting. There has been altogether too much delay about this matter and I want it finished immediately.

On August 14, 1907, Chief Engraver Charles E. Barber—who, figuratively, was dancing on Saint-Gaudens' grave—wrote this memorandum to John H. Landis, superintendent of the Philadelphia Mint:

> ...In regards to the double eagle, you will remember that dies have been made from models furnished by Mr. Saint-Gaudens and coins struck as medals and submitted to the Director with a full statement of the impossibility of using dies for coinage made from the models in their present state on account of the high relief.
>
> The last this department heard on this subject was that Mr. Saint-Gaudens had seen the impossibility of coining high relief and had determined upon reducing the relief to within the requirements of the modern coinage.
>
> I have no model for the double eagle that can be used, for the reason above stated, namely, the relief being entirely too high.
>
> I have been anticipating a new model that would not have this objectionable feature, but have not received such a one, therefore it is not in any sense the fault of this department that the dies are not ready.
>
> The appliances in this department for doing die work are of the most improved and have been used in every possible way even to working day and night and Sundays to expedite this new coinage, and in the case of making the first reduction Mr. Saint-Gaudens reported that it would take six months to get it made in Paris, while I made it in one month.
>
> I think this statement is necessary to clear up the idea that the Mint has caused any delay in the production of the new dies, as from the first I have had to wait upon Mr. Saint-Gaudens for models as I am now doing in the case of the double eagle.

Mr. Saint-Gaudens asked for samples of the models when reduced to the size of the double eagle and they were furnished, since that time I have heard nothing more of them and do not know whether he left other models or anyone to take up his work, and until the new and suitable models are sent, I am powerless to produce double eagle dies of the Saint-Gaudens model that can be used for coinage.

In the case of the eagle, Mr. Saint-Gaudens reduced the model until with the aid of the new French reducing machine it was possible to make a die that would produce a coin; this has not been done with the double eagle models and until it is done my hands are tied.

I furnish you with this full statement of the present condition of the new designs and models and respectfully await your instruction as to who will supply the models for the double eagle, and also advise that if the models were here now, it would be utterly impossible to get ready to coin the double eagle by September first.

The Ultra High Relief MCMVII $20

The MCMVII Ultra High Relief $20s were the first coins struck from Saint-Gaudens' models and were first produced in February 1907. Per the research of David E. Tripp, it seems that the first impressions were made using a leftover collar from a 1906 pattern, after which a special new collar was made. All have the inscription E PLURIBUS UNUM.

Assuming that 18 or 19 were struck, the die must have cracked on the last impression, effectively terminating production. All examples were made with satin Proof finish, with the finish on the dies (rather than added by process to the coins later). The finish under high magnification on high-quality specimens shows swirls and die-finish lines, as are also seen on the limited-production Saint-Gaudens' $10 "with periods" coins of this year.

After the eighteenth or nineteenth coin was struck, the dies were scrapped. Slightly modified dies were made shortly thereafter but, as earlier related, these also proved unsatisfactory.

The *Sherman Victory* monument at the southeast corner of Central Park, New York City, as it currently appears, having been regilded a few years ago. The author is standing at the base. (Photograph by David Calhoun, May 26, 2000)

New dies of different format, without the sharp curvature of the field near the rim and with some other differences as well, were made months later, after the summer of 1907, and 11,250 "regular" High Relief pieces were made for circulation.

As Saint-Gaudens died on August 3, 1907, it is perhaps relevant to mention that the MCMVII Ultra High Relief pieces were the only coins now known to exist that were actually made during the artist's lifetime and personally considered and reviewed by him. He never lived to see any of the 11,250 "regular" High Relief pieces. Of the latter, more will be related....

Beholding the Coin

Following all of the preceding travails and the passing of Saint-Gaudens, the Mint created a double eagle of unprecedented beauty.

Liberty is portrayed as a woman striding toward the viewer, with the resplendent rays of the sun behind. (The Indian head, considered briefly, found use on the $10 coin instead.) In her left hand (viewer's right) is a torch held aloft, and in her right hand is an olive branch. The Capitol building, small in size, can be seen at lower left. The date is given in Roman numerals, MCMVII, a classic influence. Below the date the monogram of Saint-Gaudens appears boldly. Above the head is the word LIBERTY, and around the border are 46 stars representing the states of the Union.

The motif for the obverse was taken from Saint-Gaudens' much acclaimed figure of Victory, a part of the *Sherman Victory* Monument completed in 1903 for Central Park, New York City, easily visible today from the front steps of the Plaza Hotel. Before the motif used on the coin was decided upon, a number of variations were attempted, including a figure of Victory with angelic wings. Victory is said to have been inspired by Saint-Gaudens' mistress, Davida Clark, with whom he had a child, and her visage is also to be seen on the $10 piece of 1907, but in a close-up view.

The reverse of the MCMVII $20 depicts a flying eagle with the sun below and an inscription above. As recited in the correspondence quoted, Saint-Gaudens copied this from the 1856-1858 Flying Eagle cent design. Thus the reverse is a copy of James B. Longacre's Flying Eagle cent, but this, in turn, was a copy of the eagle created by Christian Gobrecht for use on the 1836 silver dollar.

Distribution of the Ultra High Relief $20

It seems that the 18 or 19 Proofs of the MCMVII Ultra High Relief $20 were not openly distributed to numismatists.[1] Apparently, President Theodore Roosevelt received two examples, Augustus Saint-Gaudens personally obtained several, Chief Engraver Barber obtained one, and an example was furnished to the Mint Collection.

How and when the others were distributed is not known, but it has been said that assistant engraver George T. Morgan furnished the source by which Philadelphia dealer Henry Chapman obtained several for resale to the private sector. The late Louis S. Werner related to the author that he had seen Morgan's correspondence which indicated that such coins could be produced to order on special and, of course, very private request. While there is no doubt concerning this, it also seems likely that production did not extend beyond 1910-1911 at the latest (although coins "filtered out" of the Mint as late as 1915). By 1912 Adams and Woodin, drawing upon an unacknowledged source, stated that 18 had been made. If the MCMVII Ultra High Relief $20 coins had been stock-in-trade items for Morgan at a later period, doubtless more coins would be known today.

Augustus Saint-Gaudens (1848-1907)

The following obituary and appreciation is from the *American Journal of Numismatics* and was published soon after the artist's passing:

> Augustus Saint-Gaudens was born in Dublin, Ireland, March 1, 1848. His father, Bernard Paul Ernest, was a native of France, coming from the vicinity of the town of Saint Gaudens, among the spurs of the Pyrenees. His mother, whose maiden name was Mary Guinness, was a native of Dublin. They came to this country while Augustus was an infant, and after remaining three months in Boston established themselves in New York.
>
> He attended school until he was 13, when he went to work with a cameo-cutter named Avet, and served a three-years' apprenticeship, at the end of which time he found employment with a shell-cameo-cutter named Le Breton, with whom he remained for three years. During all the time that he was working at the wheel he studied drawing at night. The first four years he went to the Cooper Union; the last two were spent in the life classes of the National Academy of Design.
>
> At the age of 20 he was already a master of low relief. He then went abroad and was at the École des Beaux Arts, Paris, 1867-1870. He married in Boston, 1877, Augusta F. Homer. He was in Rome, 1870-1872, producing there, in 1871, his first figure. Among his works are *Diana* (on the tower of Madison Square Garden, New York), and numerous well-known statues in the larger cities of the Union; among the best known of these is the monument in Boston to Colonel Shaw and his regiment of colored troops, executed in bronze.[2] Some of his most charming work was done in low relief, in the form of medallions of his friends and fellow artists, and occasionally of prominent men for public memorials. He was a corresponding member of the Institute of France; officer of the Legion of Honor; received the medal of honor, Paris, 1900, and a special medal of honor at Buffalo, 1901.
>
> "Augustus Saint-Gaudens—a sculptor whose art follows but ennobles nature, confers fame and lasting remembrance, and does not count the mortal years it takes to mould immortal forms." Thus spoke President Eliot at the commencement of Harvard University in June 1897, when conferring upon the sculptor the degree of Master of Arts; and the years that have gone have not brought a worthier or more fitting tribute, one which now may well serve as an epitaph.
>
> He died at Cornish, New Hampshire, August 3, after an illness extending over several years. Greatest of all American sculptors and surpassed by few if any other sculptors in the world, his life story is a source of pride to every one of us. For he was an American through and through, and his work had America stamped indelibly upon it.

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[1] In 1913 Edgar H. Adams (pre-eminent numismatic scholar of the era) and William H. Woodin (gold coin specialist, manufacturer, and, later in 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's first secretary of the Treasury) stated that 18 were struck. Somewhat similarly, John H. Dryfhout, "The 1907 United States Gold Coinage," states that 19 were made. The same writer also tells of the circumstances of coinage of what we now know as the Ultra High Relief coins: "A set of dies for the twenty-dollar piece had been cut in February 1907 from the first models sent [to Philadelphia by Saint-Gaudens] in December 1906. These dies were used to do the sample strike of the twenty-dollar piece. The resulting 19 coins took nine blows on the hydraulic medal press to raise the impression to the desired relief..." However, various other estimates have appeared in print over the years, including 13 by Howland Wood in *The Numismatist* in 1909. Scott's 1971 *Encyclopedia* (Don Taxay) and J. Hewitt Judd's 1959 work on pattern coins suggested a mintage of 22 coins, with two melted, giving a net production of 20. In summary, printed net mintage estimates by knowledgeable numismatists have ranged from 13-20.

[2] An attraction today in Boston Common a few steps across from the Massachusetts State House. The 54th Massachusetts Volunteers depicted on the Shaw Memorial inspired the film *Glory*.

Questions and Comments About the New Coins

The Numismatist for January 1908 began with a portrait of Hon. Frank A. Leach, Director of the Mint, who had supervised production of the 1907 Saint-Gaudens coinage. Then followed a discussion of the new pieces:

> The American Numismatic Association will go on record as endorsing the new $10 and $20 gold issues, and while we may recognize that there are both commercial and artistic defects, both these will be remedied in due season. In fact, the commercial and economic faults, although simply those of convenience, have been already remedied and the artistic and numismatic will come in due time we have full faith.
>
> As numismatists we hail the innovation with much interest and satisfaction, even if it has begun with what we have always considered our best types of coinage, and hope our worst types, the 25- and 50-cent pieces, will next receive earnest consideration, and the efforts at improvement and artistic realization be continued until we have a series of coins worthy of the great nation they represent.[1] At this time we offer no apology for devoting so much space in *The Numismatist* to a subject of so much general interest and importance.

Augustus Saint-Gaudens' "Little Studio" at his home in Cornish, New Hampshire, shown as it appeared years later in the 1930s. On the table in the left foreground are sketches and a model for coinage, while a small version of the *Sherman Victory* monument is against the wall on the left. (Illustration courtesy of Mark Borckardt)

Some observers wondered why the motto respecting the Deity, a part of the $10 and $20 series since 1866, was not present on the new Saint-Gaudens designs. The answer was provided by a statement made by President Roosevelt, November 13, 1907:

> When the question of the new coinage came up we looked into the law and found there was no warrant therein for putting IN GOD WE TRUST on the coins. As the custom, although without legal warrant, had grown up, however, I might have felt at liberty to keep the inscription had I approved of its being on the coinage. But as I did not approve of it, I did not direct that it should again be put on.
>
> Of course the matter of the law is absolutely in the hands of Congress, and any direction of Congress in the matter will be immediately obeyed. At present, as I have said, there is no warrant in law for the inscription.
>
> My own feeling in the matter is due to my very firm conviction that to put such a motto on coins or to use it in any kindred manner, not only does no good but does positive harm, and is in effect irreverence which comes dangerously close to sacrilege. A beautiful and solemn sentence such as the one in question should be treated and uttered with that fine reverence which necessarily implies a certain exultation of spirit....
>
> As regards to its use on the coinage, we have actual experience by which to go. In all my life I have never heard any human being speak reverently of this motto on the coins, or show any signs of its having appealed to any high emotion in him, but I have literally hundreds of times heard it used as an occasion of, and incitement to the sneering ridicule which it is above all things undesirable that so beautiful and exalted a phrase should excite.
>
> For example, throughout the long contest extending over several decades on the free coinage question, the existence of this motto on the coins was a constant source of jest and ridicule, and this was unavoidable.
>
> Everyone must remember the innumerable cartoons and articles based on phrases like "In God We Trust For The Eight Cents," "In God We Trust For The Short Weight," "In God We Trust For The 37 Cents We Do Not Pay," etc, etc. Surely I am well within bounds when I say that a use of the phrase which invites constant levity of this type is most undesirable....

Speculation in MCMVII $20 Pieces

Another article in January issue of *The Numismatist* told of the release of the 11,250 coins minted for circulation, and what happened next:

> One of the features attending the issue of the new $20 gold pieces was the speculative interest the new pieces cause. It has been so many years since a new piece has been distributed in public, that from the

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[1] The 1892-1916 silver coins designed by Charles E. Barber received continual "bad press" in numismatic circles.

moment of its inception it was destined to be rare, both on account of the limited number issued and its novel peculiarities. An index of the rise of the Stock Exchange, and especially of the Curb Market, is exemplified in the speculation in these pieces among the curb brokers and bankers and clerks.

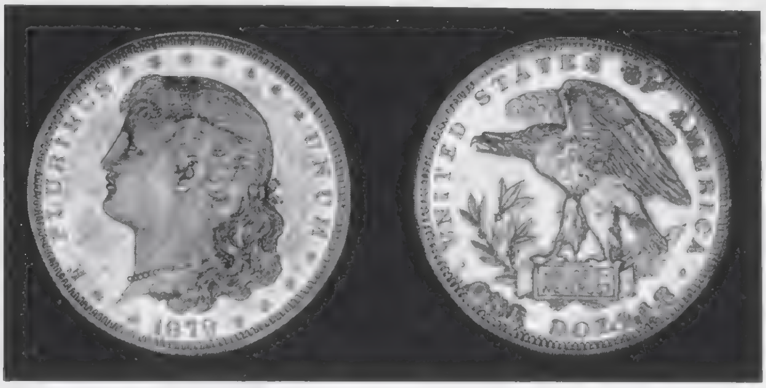
A few thousand only of these High Relief pieces were struck, and were distributed by the Philadelphia Mint to the different Sub-Treasuries the first week in December. Five hundred were allotted to Boston and only five pieces were allowed to each bank and individual that asked for the new coins. The allotment was exhausted in Boston in a single day. But a short time after this word was received that no more of these pieces would be struck and that the government was anxious to get back as many of these new pieces as possible. This was on account of the sharp wire edge on the majority of those issued, caused by the metal being forced up between the dies and the collar. A false rumor gained currency that the government would pay a premium to get these pieces back, and the prices of double eagles consequently began to soar. The various Sub-Treasuries were besieged by a host of 11th hour bargain hunters, and the tempers of the redemption clerks were sorely tried by the repeated inquiries for the new 20s.

The crowd then turned their attention to the clerks in the bank from the attendants in the federal buildings. On December 11th the following notice was posted in the Sub-Treasury in Boston: 'Clerks having a copy of the new $20 piece are forbidden selling the same at a premium.' During the second week in December active trading in the new 20s was carried on in the various curb markets in the country, prices quoted range from $26 to $35. Telegraph and long distance telephone orders were executed on the New York Curb for deliveries in other cities. Fifty changed hands in one day on the Boston Curb as prices ranged from $26 to $31. One broker sold five pieces short at $26 and later was obliged to pay $30 to cover....

Not long thereafter, Congress restored the inscription IN GOD WE TRUST, and the designs of the $10 and $20 coins were thus modified, creating "without motto" and "with motto" types for 1908.

Adventure No. 33

The 1879 "Schoolgirl" Silver Dollar



Of the dozens of different designs and die combinations of pattern silver dollars made in the nineteenth century, the "Schoolgirl," by George T. Morgan, is considered to be one of the most beautiful. (Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr. Collection, 1996, Lot 288)

Morgan's "Take 2"

In February and March 1878, George T. Morgan's Liberty Head dollar (today's "Morgan dollar") design was rushed into production following the February 28 passage of the Bland-Allison Act. The obverse and reverse designs employed were taken from the memorable series of pattern half dollars that Morgan had prepared in the preceding year, 1877.

As time went on, it was felt that the design could be improved, and toward this end several varieties of patterns were made during the next several years. The 1879 "Schoolgirl" dollar pattern was created by George T. Morgan and depicts a pretty young lass wearing a hair ribbon inscribed LIBERTY, with her hair loosely tied with a ribbon behind her head and with strands falling on her shoulders. A string of beads is around her neck.

The "Schoolgirl" dollar was made only in small numbers and only as a pattern. In the same vein, Morgan created the 1882 "Shield Earring" pattern dollar several years later. Whatever the circumstances may have been, neither the "Schoolgirl" or the "Shield Earring" dollar was ever seriously considered for circulating coinage. No doubt the criticism of Chief Engraver William Barber, himself the creator of several unadopted varieties of pattern dollars of this era, played

The reverse used on George T. Morgan's beautiful Schoolgirl pattern dollar of 1879 was adapted from his motif employed in 1877 on several different pattern half dollars, one of which is shown here. Later, essentially the same depiction was used on the 1915-S Panama-Pacific gold quarter eagle.

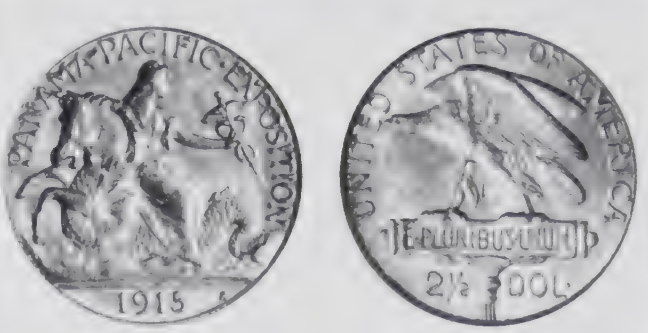
a part. At the time Morgan was the *assistant* engraver (and would remain so until Barber's death in 1917—a long time later.)

The 1879 "Schoolgirl" dollar stands today as what many consider to be the capstone of the United States pattern series or, at the very least, among the top several American coinage motifs.

The Multi-Use Reverse

The obverse of the 1879 Schoolgirl coin was original and was conceived by George T. Morgan in 1879. For the reverse he drew from his illustrious series of pattern half dollars of 1877. The motif may have been derived from a sketch prepared by Titian Peale in 1838;[1] if so, Morgan improved it greatly.

The reverse design would reappear in 1915 on the reverse that Morgan designed for the Panama-Pacific International Exposition commemorative gold quarter eagle. Of course, there are only so many ways that a defiant eagle can be depicted, and whether Morgan drew upon Peale will probably never be known. However, certainly the 1877 pattern half dollar, the 1879 "Schoolgirl" dollar, and 1915-S Panama-Pacific quarter eagle are from the same mind, although their issuance was spaced over more than 35 years.



The 1915-S commemorative gold $2.50 by George T. Morgan represents the final appearance of this reverse design (shown 2x).

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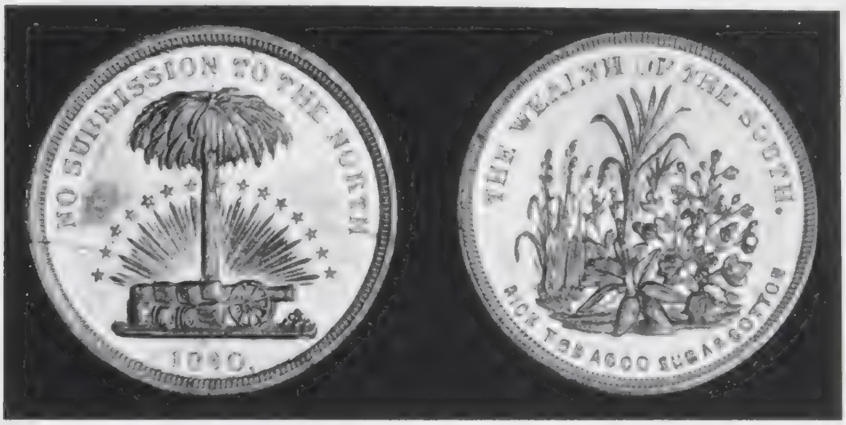
[1] Don Taxay, *U.S. Mint and Coinage*, p. 173.

ADVENTURE NO. 34

THE "WEALTH OF THE SOUTH" TOKENS

No Submission to the North



Typical Wealth of the South token, circa summer 1860. These pieces, made in Cincinnati, were advertised widely in Virginia and elsewhere and displayed sentiments of many Southerners. Later, continuing through the early 1860s, these dies were combined with others, including store cards and dies relating to 1860 presidential campaign candidates, to create an illustrious series of tokens, many of which are very rare today.

* * *

A Pivotal Time in History

Let's get technical! To me, the more obscure the avenue of numismatic inquiry, the more interesting it is. The present "adventure" may be overdoing your time and patience, and if delving into minutiae is not your forte, just skip over this lightly or abandon it altogether.

Or, read on....

"Wealth of the South"—the phrase is somewhat rhythmic. Time was—the era evoked in the opening of *Gone With the Wind* and the plantation songs of Stephen Foster—when the South had its own life style, its own traditions, and, sowing the seeds of the Civil War, slavery.

In 1860 in Cincinnati, a certain diesinker prepared tokens that featured on the reverse a suite of agricultural products, with the inscription, THE WEALTH OF THE SOUTH, above, and a listing of four crops below: RICE TOBACCO SUGAR COTTON. This sturdy die was combined with at least five obverses inscribed NO SUBMISSION TO THE NORTH, and dated 1860. These were advertised for sale in southern newspapers in the summer of that year.

The sentiment, "the wealth of the South," arose in this form in the 1850s as the North and South became polarized. In December 1857, *DeBow's Review* commented: "The wealth of the South is permanent and real, and that of the North fugitive and fictitious."[1]

It was considered that the South drew its wealth from the land, which would forever endure. In contrast, the North took its wealth from banking, manufacturing, and related enterprises of commerce, which were not fundamental to the earth. At the Democratic convention held on July 8, 1896, potential presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan gave his famous Cross of Gold Speech, a somewhat revised form of the same sentiment, stating that if cities were torn down they would spring up again as if by magic, but if farms were torn down, grass would grow in the city streets, concluding with the ringing statement, "You shall not press down upon the brow of labor this crown on thorns, you shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold." Riding on a platform of free and unlimited coinage of silver, Bryan was swept into the Democratic nomination for president.

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[1] As quoted by Robert Sobel, *Machines and Morality: the 1850s*, p. 249; original text not seen.

A Network of Interesting Tokens

While the WEALTH OF THE SOUTH reverse die proved to be sturdy, this was not true of the NO SUBMISSION TO THE NORTH obverse die, which seemed prone to cracking. At least five different obverses of this style were made, differing from each other in small particulars. Most of the dies were about 21.7 mm. in diameter.

Around the time that the Wealth of the South tokens were being made in Ohio and sold in the South, various political parties met to select their candidates for the forthcoming presidential election. Douglas, Lincoln, Bell, and Breckinridge were chosen by four different parties. Beginning in a big way with the "Tippecanoe and Tyler too" election of 1840, tokens and medalets helped advance the popularity of the various office seekers. Accordingly, the Cincinnati diesinker made obverse dies portraying these four men, and two reverse dies lettered PRESIDENTS HOUSE, and showing a front view of the White House, which were combined with the obverses. The dies picturing certain candidates cracked, and new dies were made up.

Adding to the above dies, by now numbering over a dozen, were additional dies of the same diameter, bearing the names of merchants or, in one instance, a steamship. The workmanship on all of the dies was excellent, and examination of the letter and numeral punches, as well as the general format and diameter, indicated that they emanated from a single source. But from where?

The maker of the political tokens was no fool, and after the presidential campaign ended, in November 1860, the dies were combined with others, and many different rarities were created for the numismatic trade. The interlinking of dies further served to indicate an origin from a single person or shop.

The "T" Clue

Who made the dies? And where? Close examination of the more than a dozen dies involved revealed that a version of a die inscribed PRESIDENTS HOUSE, showing the Executive Mansion (informally known as the White House), is signed with the initial T. The other dies are unsigned.

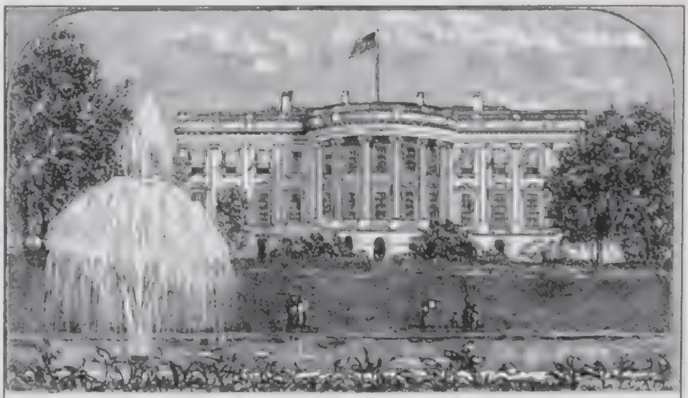
In the early 1860s, W. Elliot Woodward, the Roxbury, Massachusetts dealer who was in the ascendancy of his remarkable career, identified the "T" as the signature of diecutter "True." As Woodward actively bought and sold such freshly-minted tokens at the time, he was in a position to know. Apart from auction catalogue listings, such as Woodward's, there was little in print to aid contemporary numismatists. The first regularly-issued periodical, the *American Journal of Numismatics*, did not make its debut until 1867. *Historical Magazine*, devoted to American history in general, occasionally had features and fillers about coins, but not consistently. In this void, there were dozens of enthusiastic collectors of tokens, but information concerning them was sparse.

Satterlee's Book

The first serious study of political tokens in America was by Alfred H. Satterlee and in 1862 was published under the title of *An Arrangement of Medals and Tokens Struck in Honor of the Presidents of the United States and of the Presidential Candidates*. Although the text dealt with political figures in presidential contests, and did not include store cards (advertising tokens), the "T" initial was identified. As other dies in the series, including the Wealth of the South tokens and store cards, were by the same hand, "T" became identified as the maker of them all.

The following listings are excerpted from the Satterlee book. Note in particular the comment following No. 357:

> **No. 299:** *Obverse*. Head of Lincoln facing to the left. "FOR PRESIDENT, ABRAHAM LINCOLN



The President's House or Executive Mansion, later popularly known as the White House, was featured on the reverse of several different political campaign tokens struck from dies cut by Benjamin True in 1860. (Portrait from *Perley's Reminiscences*, Vol. II, 1886)

OF ILL." *Reverse.* A representation of the White House at Washington. "PRESIDENTS HOUSE." Copper. Size 14.

No. 300: Same as the preceding. Brass. Size 14.

No. 301: Same as the preceding. White metal. Size 14.

No. 326: *Reverse [sic]*, Head of Douglas facing to the left. "FOR PRESIDENT, STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS, OF ILL." *Obverse.* A representation of the White House at Washington. "PRESIDENTS HOUSE." Copper. Size 14.

No. 327: Same as the preceding. Brass. Size 14.

No. 328: Same as the preceding. White metal. Size 14.

No. 346: *Obverse.* Head of Bell facing to the left. "FOR PRESIDENT, JOHN BELL OF TENN." *Reverse.* A representation of the White House at Washington. "PRESIDENTS HOUSE." Copper. Size 14.

No. 347: Same as the preceding. Brass. Size 14.

No. 348: Same as the preceding. White metal. Size 14.

No. 355: *Obverse.* Head of Breckinridge facing to the left. "FOR PRESIDENT, JOHN C. BRECKENRIDGE [*sic*] OF KY." *Reverse.* A representation of the White House at Washington. "PRESIDENTS HOUSE." Copper. Size 14.

No. 356: Same as the preceding. Brass. Size 14.

No. 357: Same as the preceding. White metal. Size 14.

Notes [by Satterlee, pp. 83-84]: 299 to 301, 326 to 328, 346 to 348, 355 to 357. Dies cut by B.F. True, Cincinnati.[1]

Satterlee did not seem to have been aware of any irrelevant mulings such as presidential portrait obverse dies with Wealth of the South reverse dies or with other portrait dies.

Learning about True

In 1860, per the Cincinnati *City Directory*, Benjamin C. True was a die sinker at 139 West 5th Street, Cincinnati, which was the same business address used by die sinker John Stanton. True resided at 248 Hopkins Street.

It is seen that True was in Cincinnati, as Satterlee wrote, and, further, that he was associated in some way with John Stanton, who was the largest-volume maker of tokens and medals in the city at the time. In later years such students of tokens as George Hetrich (1924) and George J. Fuld in the 1950s and 1960s would publish much information delineating the thousands of Civil War tokens and related issues made by Stanton and his local competitor, William K. Lanphear. In the *Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine* in 1958 George Fuld and his father Melvin presented a feature on Wealth of the South issues.

As was usually the case for tokens and medals made for numismatists at the time, few records were kept. Today it becomes a challenge to examine the tokens and try to figure out in what order they were struck and how rare they are.

More about Benjamin True

Substantial factual information concerning Benjamin C. True has eluded several generations of numismatic scholars. What have been located are snippets and pieces of what must surely be a larger picture. An overview of what has reached print may be of interest:

One of the first serious studies of True was by Lyman H. Low, prominent nineteenth-century numismatic author and rare coin dealer. Any listing of serious scholars of that century must of necessity include Low, along with Charles I. Bushnell, Sylvester S. Crosby, Benjamin C. Wright, Charles E. Anthon, and a dozen or two others.

In the *American Journal of Numismatics*, April 1899, information about True was presented by Low, later printed in book form in his *Hard Times Tokens* monograph, 1900. In connection with a token (Low No. 88) issued in Troy, N.Y., this information was given:

> There were two die-cutters in Troy named True—Benjamin C. and Daniel. Judging from the appearance of their names in the directories, the first was the elder, but whether relatives or not, I have not found.
>
> Benjamin C. was a "letter cutter," having a shop at 7 Beaver Street, and residence at 134 Lydius Street, as early as 1832. In 1834 he is called a gunsmith, and in 1835 a die-cutter, at 7 Beaver Street, "upstairs." In 1840 he added to his business as a die-cutter that of a "military store keeper"—perhaps making military buttons—and his store was 88 North Market Street, if the notes furnished me are correct. In 1842-4 he was in business with J. Roseboom & Co., on Church and Division streets, but I have not been able to trace him further.
>
> Daniel True was a die-cutter at 48 Union Street as early as 1837, and continued to do business as such at various locations, in time adding that of seal engraving until 1856, when he seems to have been the senior partner in the firm of True & Pilkington, and his address was Bleecker Hall. In 1858 he was at the same location, alone. In 1868, the same name—presumably the same person—appears as a die-cutter and steel engraver on Hudson Street, and afterwards at 396

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[1] Apparently, this is the source of the later Benjamin F. True error (instead of the correct Benjamin C. True), repeatedly cited by many later writers including DeWitt and Sullivan.

> Broadway until 1879. The work of this engraver (whether Benjamin or Daniel is uncertain), as shown on these tokens is not of a very high order.

The tokens in question date from early part of the Hard Times era, 1835-1840, and were issued by O. & P. Boutwell,[1] Bucklin's Interest Tables, N. Starbuck & Son, and J. & C. Peck, all of Troy, N.Y. Some dies were signed "T," but one, the variety of Bucklin's known as Low-93, is signed "TRUE ALB." For a long time, the "ALB" (for Albany, N.Y., across the Hudson River from Troy) was regarded as perplexing, inasmuch as the Trues were listed with Troy addresses. Low seems to have overlooked Satterlee's 1862 mention of Benjamin *F.* (wrong initial used by Satterlee) being located in Cincinnati, or perhaps he though that Benjamin F. True was a different person. We may never know.

The Cincinnati Link

In *The Numismatist,* January 1941, Alfred Z. Reed, a Colorado Springs collector, contributed "The Trues, Die Cutters in Albany and Cincinnati," bringing Cincinnati into the equation and going a step beyond what Lyman H. Low had written. Reed's notes reveal that he had corresponded widely and had consulted many directories. In the course of his inquiries he learned that the addresses thought by Lyman H. Low to have been in Troy were, in fact, Albany addresses. Thus, at last the "TRUE ALB" die signature made sense.

As Low stated years earlier, the Albany-Troy Hard Times tokens attributed to "True" are "not of a very high order." The die work is very crude and rustic. In contrast, the circa 1860-1861 Wealth of the South and related political tokens and store cards are of an especially high degree of workmanship, indeed among the most finely executed dies of the Civil War period. Could the Hard Times tokens have been the work of Daniel and not Benjamin?

Benjamin C. True, last cited in Albany directories in 1844, is listed for the first time in a Cincinnati, OH, directory in 1856, as a die sinker. This listing was repeated in 1860, as quoted earlier. Years later in 1870 he was listed as an attorney. The Cincinnati directories of the mid-nineteenth century are often erratic and inconsistent, and it is highly probable that True resided there for many if not most intervening years as well.

True and the Political Tokens of 1860

The style of the 1860-1861 political medalets may provide clues to the authorship of earlier True-signed dies. The 1860-1861 medalets each have a peripheral inscription with an inner ring enclosing a portrait of the candidate. The presidential election of November 7, 1860, came at the end of the most tumultuous nomination process in American history. Four political parties were in the fray. The final results were:

Republican Party: Abraham Lincoln and Hannibal Hamlin. 1,866,352 popular votes.

Democratic Party: Stephen A. Douglas and Herschel V. Johnson. 1,375,157.

Constitutional Union Party: John Bell and Edward Everett. 589,581.

Southern Democratic Party: John C. Breckinridge and Joseph Lane. 845,763.

A similar style to that used on the 1860 tokens is found on DeWitt HC 1836-1, a 36 mm. medal attributed by some (*e.g.,* Alfred Satterlee and Alfred Z. Reed) to the presidential election of 1832, and by J. Doyle DeWitt (in *A Century of Campaign Buttons,* 1959) to the contest of 1836.

DeWitt stated: "The dies were made by Benjamin C. True of Albany." The obverse had the peripheral lettering, HENRY CLAY OF KENTUCKY, a circle, and at the center the bust of Clay wearing a toga, facing left. The die is signed TRUE F. (True fecit = True "made it"). The reverse is very ornate and illustrates a collage of emblems including a shield, scroll, liberty cap, commercial items, etc. There is absolutely no relationship in quality between this superbly executed medal and the rustic copper Hard Times tokens of the same period.

Playing the devil's advocate, I find it curious that this Clay medal, if made for the 1836 campaign (Clay's last bid for the office of president came years later in 1844), had no counterparts in style among other medals made for subsequent elections such as 1840, 1844, 1848, 1852, and 1856. This Clay medal, *alone,* is of the obverse style used in 1860 for the medals and medalets of Lincoln, Douglas, Breckinridge, and Bell. Could the Clay medal have been made in the late 1850s as a numismatic piece?

For the 1860 election, Benjamin C. True, of Cincinnati, produced several large-diameter medals in addition to the 21.7 mm. medalets combined with the PRESIDENTS HOUSE and other dies, these larger pieces being beyond the scope of the already far-ranging present commentary.[2]

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[1] Later, in 1863, Oliver Boutwell issued Civil War store cards.

[2] The medals, 38 mm. diameter, are listed by DeWitt as: AL 1860-18 (Abraham Lincoln); SD 1860-2 (Stephen Douglas); JBELL 1860-1 (John Bell), and JCB 1860- (John C. Breckinridge).

The Stanton Connection

In an article, "Cincinnati Civil War Store Cards," in *The Numismatist*, July 1911, Henry Clay Ezekiel, a longtime Cincinnati collector, stated that he knew local diesinker and token-issuer John Stanton, who was still living at the age of 82. Relative to the Wealth of the South tokens, Ezekiel related this:

> These little copper war tokens, copperheads or store cards passed readily as money in value of one cent from hand to hand, and no questions were ever asked in respect to them. They were quite convenient for making change, and no one questioned that the firms or individuals who issued them would redeem them promptly, which, of course, was done, excepting where they were gathered up by collectors and are still held by them.
>
> Mr. Stanton also made quite a number of sutlers' checks for most all of the Western regiments that went into the war. He also made, about 1861, the well-known "Wealth of the South" series, of which he sold a great many, not only in the North, but in the South, and they were used as tokens and also as badges at the time they were made.
>
> He issued a circular describing them and sent the same to all the papers throughout the South at the beginning of the war. They advertised them extensively and large numbers of them were sold by him. There was considerable Confederate sentiment in and about Cincinnati, where large quantities were disposed of, and they were worn as badges by Southern sympathizers.

Collectors of *Civil War* tokens who are purists and who limit their acquisitions to tokens made only during the war in question, which began in April 1861 and ended in April 1865, can take heart at the preceding, as Ezekiel places their issue "at the beginning of the war."

However, while such pieces may have been sold at that time, they were also sold earlier, such as via Richmond newspapers in the summer of 1860. J. Doyle DeWitt takes the view that they were sold before and during the war and adds the comment that they are *Confederate tokens:*

> The dies for this Confederate token were cut by Benjamin C. True, of Cincinnati. During 1860 and the early days of the war, while communication with the South was open via the Louisville and Nashville Railroad, large quantities of these tokens were shipped by freight and distributed through the South.
>
> During the war, all freight was required to pass inspection by the Custom House officers at Cincinnati. Some years after the war, several kegs of these tokens were discovered in the freight office at Cincinnati where they had been detained.[1] The original copies were silvered copper and holed.

In his 1884 sale of the J.N.T. Levick Collection, one of the greatest token auctions ever held, W. Elliot Woodward gave this information, stating incorrectly that they had not been struck until "the war was well under way":

> About the time that the war broke out these pieces were discovered, and as the date, 1860, preceded the commencement of hostilities, much indignation was expressed that the South, in anticipation of secession, should have issued this token. It was presently discovered that it was the work of a Cincinnati die-sinker, and that it had not been thought of until the war was well under way.

Much more could be quoted about when and where these pieces were struck, as opinions and theories have been aplenty.

The time of striking is somewhat moot, as the dies for the Wealth of the South tokens, as well as for the store cards and the 1860 presidential candidate tokens, were all used during the Civil War to make pieces for collectors, as well as some fewer examples of certain varieties for commercial use.

Regarding the tokens with PRESIDENTS HOUSE on the reverse and various portraits on each obverse, this advertisement was printed in a Richmond, Virginia newspaper on August 14, 1860, to run five times:[2]

> Wanted—Agents to sell CAMPAIGN MEDALS. The likenesses of the candidates for President are correct. The price of the Medals is $5 per hundred. Agents are now selling from 100 to 200 per day. A specimen of either medal will be sent (by mail) upon receipt of the retail price, 15 cents.[3] Address John Stanton, Stamp and brand Cutter, 139 Fifth Street, Cincinnati, OH August 14—5t.

Stated briefly, the facts are these: In 1860, before the Civil War, certain Wealth of the South tokens and certain political tokens were struck. Some store cards may have been struck as well. During the Civil War, most of the preceding dies as well as other dies were used to make tokens. A handy rule of thumb, not without exception, is that if a Wealth of the South or a political token is holed for suspension (on a necklace or bracelet, by its recipient) or, better yet, both holed and slightly worn, it was probably struck in 1860. Unworn, unholed pieces are nearly all numismatic strikings.

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[1] The present writer (QDB) knows nothing about this hoard or its disposition.

[2] Copy provided by Charles McSorley.

[3] This is the price for *three* candidates' medals. Just as Lincoln was not on the local ballot, his election medal was not included in the sample offering.

Store cards were not holed to begin with, and the best evidence for one actually used in trade is the evidence of wear or, in some instances, counterstamping with numerals, such as "25" to denote the value of 25 cents.

Further, many pieces are in such combinations as to indicate that they were made as "numismatic delicacies." A prime example is combining a Lincoln portrait die—Lincoln being the very epitome of a Northerner—with the WEALTH OF THE SOUTH reverse die, or tokens combining the portraits of two different candidates, each from a different party.

Are you still following this labyrinthine sequence of numismatic commentary? All of this encapsulates (?) what has taken me many years of delving to sort out! And, there is more to be done—such as poring through a complete run of a popular Cincinnati newspaper for the period 1860-1865 (an immense file which, in its infinite wisdom, the Library of Congress deaccessioned a few years back).

Known Store Card Dies in the Series

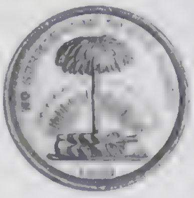
In addition to the preceding Wealth of the South and political candidate dies, several dies bearing the imprints of merchants from Ohio and Tennessee were created as part of the series. These include Steamer Lancaster No. 4; Cossitt, Hill & Co.; Elliott, Vinson & Co.; Stockman & Co.; Weighell & Son trading as the Excelsior Tobacco Works. These are described below.

Summary of Dies

The preceding dies were muled in many combinations. Whether a die is an *obverse* or a *reverse* eludes definition due to the many irrelevant combinations. Store card collectors designate the store card dies as the obverses and all political dies as reverses. Collectors of patriotic and political tokens are apt to designate the "heads" or portrait dies as obverses and the PRESIDENTS HOUSE and shield dies as reverses. As to the WEALTH OF THE SOUTH and NO SUBMISSION TO THE NORTH dies, the Fuld text lists the WEALTH die as the obverse and the NO SUBMISSION die as the reverse.

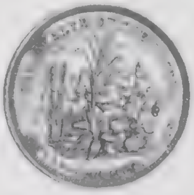
For purposes of study, I have assigned numbers to "obverse" dies and letters to "reverse" dies. The dies are also cross-referenced to Fuld numbers. In some instances the same die has two different Fuld numbers:[1]

Obverse Dies



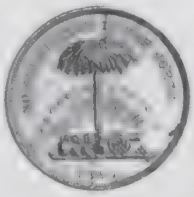
No. 1 of five known "No Submission to the North" dies.

1: NO SUBMISSION TO THE NORTH, 1860. Die 1. [Fuld 0514 & 1426] • NO SUBMISSION TO THE NORTH at top border; palmetto tree with bales, hogsheads, cannon, and cannonballs at its base; rays of glory emanating from base area, longer, thicker rays each with a five-pointed star at its tip; total of 15 stars. Stars arranged 7 left of tree and 8 right. Star 8 with three rays behind palmetto trunk. Date 1860 below. Dentils at border. • No period after NORTH. Crown (midpoint of top) of tree slightly right of center of N (SUBMISSION). Rays begin low, at upper right corner of bale on the left side of the token; however, on the right side, rays are high and begin over a space at upper right of cannon barrel. No period after date.



No 2 of five known "No Submission to the North" dies.

2: NO SUBMISSION TO THE NORTH, 1860. Die 2. [Fuld 0515] • NO SUBMISSION TO THE NORTH at top border; palmetto tree with bales, hogsheads, cannon, and cannonballs at its base; rays of glory emanating from base area, longer, thicker rays each with a five-pointed star at its tip; total of 15 stars. Stars arranged 8 left of tree and 7 right. Star 8 with three rays behind palmetto trunk. Date 1860. below. Dentils at border. • Period after NORTH. Crown (midpoint of top) of tree below right upright of N (SUBMISSION). Rays begin high and well clear of upper right corner of bale on the left side of the token and upper right of cannon barrel on the right side of the token. Tops of 1 (1860) and 6 high; 0 large. Period after date.



No. 3 of five known "No Submission to the North" dies.

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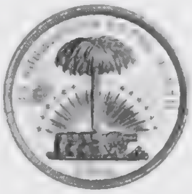
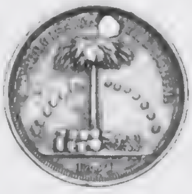
[1] Those listed in Fuld's Patriotic Civil War Tokens have numbers below 1,000. The same dies, if used on a store card, are numbered

3: NO SUBMISSION TO THE NORTH, 1860. Die 3. [Fuld 0516] • NO SUBMISSION TO THE NORTH at top border; palmetto tree with bales, hogsheads, cannon, and cannonballs at its base; rays of glory emanating from base area, longer, thicker rays each with a five-pointed star at its tip; total of 15 stars. Stars arranged 7 left of tree and 8 right. Star 8 with three rays behind palmetto trunk. Date 1860. below. Dentils at border. • Period after NORTH. Crown (midpoint of top) of tree slightly to the right of letter N (SUBMISSION). Rays begin about opposite the upper right corner of bale on the left side of the token and slightly down from the upper right of cannon barrel on the right side of the token. Period after date.



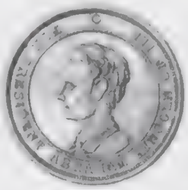
No. 4 of five known "No Submission to the North" dies.

4: NO SUBMISSION TO THE NORTH, 1860. Die 4. [Fuld 0517] • NO SUBMISSION TO THE NORTH at top border; palmetto tree with bales, hogsheads, cannon, and cannonballs at its base; rays of glory emanating from base area, longer, thicker rays each with a five-pointed star at its tip; total of 15 stars. Stars arranged 7 left of tree and 8 right. Star 8 with two leftmost rays behind palmetto trunk. Date 1860. below. Dentils at border. • No period after NORTH. Crown (midpoint of top) of tree below left upright of N (SUBMISSION). Rays begin low, at upper right corner of bale on the left side of the token and at upper right of cannon barrel on the right side of the token. Period after date.



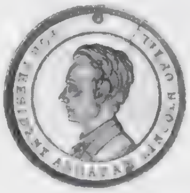
No. 5 of five known "No Submission to the North" dies.

5: NO SUBMISSION TO THE NORTH, 1860. Die 5. [Fuld 0518] • NO SUBMISSION TO THE NORTH. at top border; palmetto tree with bales, hogsheads, cannon, and cannonballs at its base; rays of glory emanating from base area, longer, thicker rays each with a five-pointed star at its tip; total of 15 stars. Stars arranged 7 left of tree and 8 right. Star 8 with only the two rightmost rays showing from behind the palmetto trunk. Date 1860 below. Dentils at border. • Period after NORTH. Crown (midpoint of top) of tree below center of N (SUBMISSION). Rays begin low, at upper right corner of bale on the left side of the token and just below center of cannon barrel on the right side of the token. No period after date. • *Quite possibly the rarest of the NO SUBMISSION TO THE NORTH dies.*



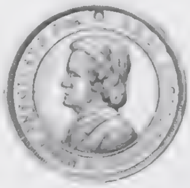
One of two known Abraham Lincoln dies in the series. Compare with the following.

6: ABRAHAM LINCOLN OF ILL. Die 1. [Fuld 0506 & 1418] • ***Lincoln portrait facing left (FOR PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN OF ILL).*** Inscription (without period after ILL) around outer border, circle (representing a suggested point for piercing) above. Circle within, enclosing beardless portrait of Lincoln facing left. Slightly more spacing between top of head and circle than on the following (1419). Dentils around border. • Front of Lincoln's coat ends above upright of B (ABRAHAM). Back of coat ends over upright of L (LINCOLN). Lettering in PRESIDENT is closer to center circle than to border dentils. Lettering in OF ILL closer to border dentils than to center circle; I double punched at bottom. R (ABRAHAM) over erroneous H, with the top part still visible; 2nd A low.



Abraham Lincoln, the second die with his portrait.

7: ABRAHAM LINCOLN OF ILL. Die 2. [Fuld 0507 & 1419] • ***Lincoln portrait facing left (FOR PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN OF ILL.).*** Inscription (with period after ILL.) around outer border, circle (representing a suggested point for piercing) above. Circle within, enclosing beardless portrait of Lincoln facing left. Slightly less spacing between top of head and circle than on the preceding (1418). Dentils around border. • Lincoln's tie is above left upright of B (ABRAHAM); coat at circle ends over center of B. At right, coat ends above upper right serif of L (LINCOLN). Top circle for piercing touches dentils and is double punched (overlapping circles).



The only known John C. Breckinridge die variety, although as minute differences have not been widely

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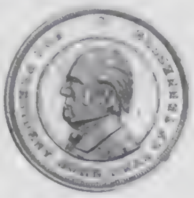
in the 1,000 series in the other Fuld book, *Civil War Store Cards.* • The numbers and letters assigned by me in the following listings—1, 2, 3, and A, B, C, etc.—are only my own reference notes and are not published elsewhere. As study progresses, they are a handy way for anyone interested to communicate new information to me.

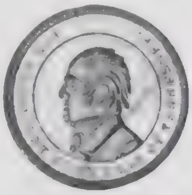
studied, the possibility exists of finding another. The same can be said for certain of the other motifs in the series.

8: JOHN C. BRECKINRIDGE OF KY. [Fuld 0508 & 1420] • ***Breckinridge portrait facing left (FOR PRESIDENT JOHN C. BRECKINRIDGE OF KY.).*** Inscription around outer border, circle (representing a suggested point for piercing) above. Circle within, enclosing portrait of Breckinridge facing left. Dentils around border. • At top, circle is very close to dentils and is connected by a rough raised area in the die. F (FOR) high. Left edge of coat is opposite space between O (JOHN) and H. N (JOHN) low. Right edge of coat is opposite space between C (BRECKINRIDGE) and K.



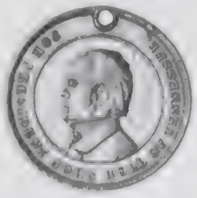
The first of three dies relating to John Bell, presidential candidate from Tennessee.

9: JOHN BELL OF TENNESSEE. Die 1. [Fuld 0509 & 1158] • Bell portrait facing left. FOR PRESIDENT JOHN BELL OF TENNESSEE around outer border, circle (representing a suggested point for piercing) above. Circle within, enclosing portrait of Bell facing left. Dentils around border. • Left bottom of portrait ends over left side of J (JOHN); right side ends right of center of second L (BELL); coat protrudes through circle at this point at the right. Within circle at top there is a tiny centering dot.



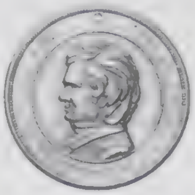
The second die depicting presidential hopeful John Bell.

10: JOHN BELL OF TENNESSEE. Die 2. [Fuld 0509A] • Bell portrait facing left. FOR PRESIDENT JOHN BELL OF TENNESSEE. Inscription around outer border, circle (representing a suggested point for piercing) above. Circle within, enclosing portrait of Bell facing left. Dentils around border. • Left bottom of portrait ends over left side of O in JOHN; right side ends over center of O in OF.



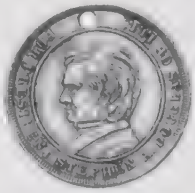
The third die featuring John Bell, one of this extensive inter-related series by Benjamin C. True, Cincinnati diesinker.

11: JOHN BELL OF TENNESSEE. Die 3. [Fuld 0509B] • Bell portrait facing left (FOR PRESIDENT JOHN BELL OF TENNESSEE.). Inscription around outer border, circle (representing a suggested point for piercing) above. Circle within, enclosing portrait of Bell facing left. Dentils around border. • Left bottom of portrait ends over center of J in JOHN; right side ends over right side of second L in BELL.



The first of two known die varieties depicting Stephen A. Douglas, a contender in the 1860 presidential contest.

12: STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS OF IL. Die 1. [Fuld 0510 & 1422] • Douglas portrait facing left. FOR PRESIDENT STEPHEN R. DOUGLAS OF ILL. Inscription around outer border, circle (representing a suggested point for piercing) above. Circle within, enclosing portrait of Douglas facing left. Dentils around border. • *FOR closer to outer border than to inner circle;* bottom of O defective. S (PRESIDENT) high. 1st E (STEPHEN) leans left. F (OF) dramatically doubled at left. *Left side of portrait ends to right of T (PRESIDENT).* Right side of portrait ends over A. (STEPHEN A.).



The second die variety showing Douglas was not known until found by the writer in 2000. Soon thereafter, another was found, and it is likely that others exist.

13: STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS OF IL. Die 2. [unlisted by Fuld[1]] • Douglas portrait facing left. FOR PRESIDENT STEPHEN R. DOUGLAS OF ILL. Inscription around outer border, circle (representing a suggested point for piercing) above. Circle within, enclosing portrait of Douglas facing left. Dentils around border. • *FOR centered between outer border and inner circle.* T (PRESIDENT) low. *Left side of portrait ends above S (STEPHEN).* Right side of portrait ends over A. (STEPHEN A.).

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[1] Identified on May 29, 2000 by QDB as a new die variety. Another specimen was sent to QDB for inspection on behalf of the Civil War Token Society, by Dr. Larkin M. Wilson, July 20, 2000.

STEAMER
LANCASTER No 4

Store card die made for the Civil War vessel, the steamer *Lancaster No. 4*, which was combined extensively with others in the Benjamin C. True series. Originally, the die was made for a drayage token and was probably meant to be counterstamped "25" at the open center, signifying its value as 25 cents in transferring goods to and from the dock where the *Lancaster No. 4* tied up.

14: Steamer Lancaster No. 4. Cincinnati, Ohio [Fuld OH-165-FXa; formerly known as Fuld TN-600-E] • STEAMER / LANCASTER No. 4 at top and bottom borders. Center blank (as if to permit stamping with a number for use as a drayage token or claim check). Dentils at border. • Small o (No) with period beneath. Crosslet 4. A very well made die.

The *Lancaster No. 4* was one of a series of *Lancaster* sidewheelers in passenger and freight service in and out of Cincinnati. *No. 4*, of 218 tons, was built at Dan Morton's shipyard in Cincinnati and launched in January 1861.[1] Captain Lewis Morris was at the helm as she plied the Ohio River route to New Richmond, Indiana (where Capt. Morris lived), for David Gibson & Co., shippers and commission merchants in Cincinnati. John Connor was the ship's clerk. During the Civil War she was chartered in service to the Union, and in spring 1862 she carried troops on the Tennessee River. Beginning in June 1864 she served on the route from New Orleans to Vicksburg with Capt. M.J. McCullough and with John G. Harrington as clerk. In the autumn she entered service on the Missouri River. On November 18, 1864, she ran into a log below Portland, Missouri, and sank in 10 feet of water. At the time she was still under the Gibson charter to the United States. • In contrast to the store card dies for the Excelsior Tobacco Works (Weighell & Son), the Steamer Lancaster No. 4; Cossitt, Hill & Co.; Elliot, Vinson & Co.; and Stockman & Co. dies, similar to each other in concept, have lettering curved at the borders with a large blank area at the center. This blank area was intended to be stamped by the user with numbers, usually "25," and to be used as drayage tokens (for hauling goods to and from river steamers).

GOOD FOR
20
CENTS
IN
TOBACCO
AT
WEIGHELL & SON

Weighell & Son store card die combined with another die, the latter irrelevant, to create a numismatic delicacy. Also see Excelsior Tobacco Co. die listed under reverse dies. Both of these dies were combined with others in the series of pieces made by Benjamin C. True. Today, any impression from either of these dies is a rarity.

15: Weighell & Son. Cincinnati, Ohio [Fuld OH-165-GI] • GOOD FOR / 20 / CENTS [six-pointed star low to each side] / IN / TOBACCO / AT / WEIGHELL & SON'S. Dentils at border. • E's patched with cusp-like punch.[2] 2 (20) is smaller than adjacent 0. C (CENTS) slightly high; top of T slightly low.

1860 *Williams' Cincinnati Directory:* Weighell & Son. John Weighell & Son, cigar manufacturers, 210 and 212 Elm Street, at the corner of Elm Street. John Weighell and John T. Weighell. John lived in Clifton. John T.'s address was not given. The trade name was the Excelsior Tobacco Works. • Two dies were made to be combined with each other, one with inscriptions relating to the Excelsior Tobacco Works and the other to Weighell & Son, these being one and the same business. However, the dies separately were combined with others in the series to create numismatic delicacies. As a class, tokens from either or both of these dies are very rare.

COSSITT HILL & CO.
MEMPHIS.

Store card die made for a Cossitt, Hill & Co. drayage token.

16: Cossitt, Hill & Co. Memphis, Tennessee. [Fuld TN-600-A] • COSSITT HILL & CO. at top border. MEMPHIS. at bottom border. Dentils at border slant slightly left. • ***Additional die note(s):*** There should be a comma after COSSITT. Connector from bottom center of 2nd M (MEMPHIS) to upper right is partly missing; lower left serif of I is irregular.

1860 Memphis Directory: Cossitt, Hill & Talmadge. Frederick H. Cossitt, Ira M. Hill, and Henry T. Talmadge. Importers and jobbers in staple and fancy dry goods, and dealers in boots, shoes, hats, caps, and saddlery at 210 and 212 Main Street, corner of Jefferson. Frederick H. Cossitt and Henry Talmadge each resided in New York (New York City?). Ira M. Hill resided at the northeast corner of 3rd and Court streets.

Store card die for an Elliott, Vinson & Co. drayage token.

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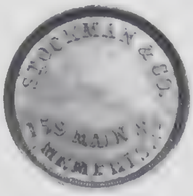
[1] Frederick Way, Jr., *Way's Packet Directory, 1848-1983*, pp. 277-278.

[2] This patched E is known on MI-225-CL, OH-165-Q, OH-165ADb, OH-165-GI, OH-165-Amb, and OH-345-D.

17: Elliott, Vinson & Co. Memphis, Tennessee. [Fuld TN-600-B] • ELLIOTT, VINSON & CO. at top border. MEMPHIS at bottom border. Dentils at border.

Firm not listed in 1860 Memphis directory. No one with surname of Vinson listed. Several Elliotts are listed.

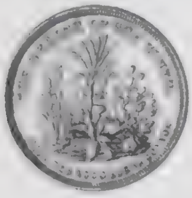


The Stockman & Co. drayage token die. This was combined with several other dies to create special pieces for the numismatic trade.

18: Stockman & Co. Memphis, Tennessee. [Fuld TN-600-F] • STOCKMAN & CO. / 159 MAIN ST. [large area of open field above] / MEMPHIS. Dentils at border. • 5 (159) is a larger numeral. Center dot.

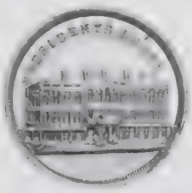
John Stockman, merchant, boarded at H.H. Potter's as did Mrs. Louisa Stockman; these being the only people with that surname listed.[1]

Reverse Dies



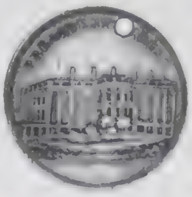
The sturdy, much-mated WEALTH OF THE SOUTH die, the key die in this illustrious series.

A: WEALTH OF THE SOUTH. [Fuld 0511 & 1423] • THE WEALTH OF THE SOUTH above; group of growing plants at center; RICE TOBACCO SUGAR COTTON below. Dentils at border. • RI (RICE) double punched; E imperfect. First O (TOBACCO) and A doubled. A (SUGAR) repunched and filled. Many other letters show light doubling, especially under high magnification.



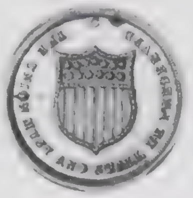
The first of the PRESIDENTS HOUSE dies. This one is signed "T" for Benjamin C. True.

B: PRESIDENTS HOUSE. Die 1. [Fuld 0510A & 1421] • View of the White House, PRESIDENTS HOUSE above. *Die cutter's initial T in lawn near left border.* Dentils at border slant slightly to left. • P (PRESIDENT) is very close to building. Lower right corner of right base of E (HOUSE) is over upper right corner of chimney. The top of each chimney is flared to the left and right. Two trees with prominent trunks rise from a clump of shrubbery near the center of the White House.



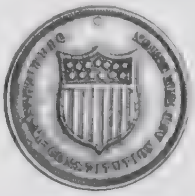
The second PRESIDENTS HOUSE die.

C: PRESIDENTS HOUSE. Die 2. [Fuld 0510B] • View of the White House, PRESIDENTS HOUSE above. *No die cutter's initial (T) on lawn below left side of building.* Dentils at border. • P (PRESIDENT) distant from building. Lower right corner of right base of E (HOUSE) is over upper left corner of chimney. The top of each chimney is plain (not flared as on die 0510A). The lawn in front of the White House is much larger and contains more small shrubs than does die 0510A.



The first of two shield dies, this one repeating a popular political inscription dating back to a comment by Andrew Jackson made in 1830.

D: Shield. THE UNION MUST AND SHALL BE PRESERVED. [Fuld 0512 & 1424] • Shield. Hollow ring (indicating suggestion for perforation) at top. Inscription begins to the left and continues counterclockwise around the bottom of the border. At the center a shield with prominent outline; at the bottom, 8 heavy vertical "white" stripes and 7 finely-lined stripes; at the top, stars arranged in two lines, 7 and 6, against a stippled background. Dentils at border. • Upper left shield point is close to upper right of H (THE); upper right point is above upright of 3rd E (PRESERVED).[2] Bottom tip of shield is slightly left of the center of S (SHALL). Outline of shield has some curlicue embellishments.



Shield die with a different inscription, one of two shield dies in the series.

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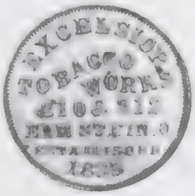
[1] H.H. Potter, a wholesale dealer in liquor, wine, tobacco, cigars, etc., did business at 173 Main Street. His home was on the south side of Court Street between 3rd and 4th streets.

[2] Relative to the inscription, President Andrew Jackson, at the Jefferson Day dinner, April 8, 1830, toasted the Union: 'Our Fed-

E: Shield. OUR RIGHTS, THE CONSTITUTION AND THE UNION. [Fuld 0513 & 1425] • Inscription around border beginning upper left and continuing counterclockwise. Ring (suggestion for perforation location) at top. At the center, a shield. Dentils at border. • T's shaded on the upright, due to punch. O (OUR) high. Comma after RIGHTS is a period with an extension added.



Store card reverse die for the Excelsior Tobacco Works, Weighell & Son.

F: Excelsior Tobacco Works. Cincinnati, Ohio [Fuld OH-165-AMb] • EXCELSIOR / TOBACCO / WORKS / 210 & 212 / ELM ST. CIN. O. / ESTABLISHED / 1835. Dentils at border are widely spaced. • E's (EXCELSIOR) patched with cusp-like punch. T (TOBACCO) double punched at base. S (WORKS) double punched at right. S (ST.) slightly low.

A blank die with no center inscription, but with dentils at the border—a die-to-be, that never was!

G: Blank die. With dentils at border, but with no lettering or motif. [Fuld 0519 & 1427; also Fuld 0519B]

In the Works

If you have made it this far, you know about as much as I do concerning the different dies related to Benjamin C. True's Wealth of the South series. In addition, I have compiled extensive notes concerning die cracks, repunchings, known pieces in different metals, etc., but as there is much more to be done—and as space is at a premium, sort of, in this book—I will not delineate them here.

Suffice it to say that some dies were mated with just one or two or three others, while certain other dies had many partners. By studying minute die cracks and other details, I hope to be able to determine the order in which such pieces were produced. Civil War token specialists are forewarned!

Returning to the Past

There is no doubt in my mind that among the greatest of all numismatic treasures is a basic library. Fortunately, in the field of tokens and medals, some of the most informative references are rather inexpensive, the main challenge being to find them, rather than figure out how to arrange payment.

In relation to the Wealth of the South tokens, I have found that such listings serve to help determine when a given token was issued. If a token is listed for sale in May 1862, it can be assumed that the token existed by that time.

I share with you some listings selected from among several hundred nineteenth-century auction catalogues and other references studied. By any evaluation, in the early days the catalogues of W. Elliott Woodward were the most descriptive in the token and medal field.

Lilliendahl Sale (1862)

This citation is significant for what it *did not* contain:

On May 26-28, 1862, The William A. Lilliendahl Collection, catalogued by William H. Strobridge, crossed the block at Bangs, Merwin & Co., New York City. Slightly more than two pages of space was devoted to medals and medalets of Lincoln, Douglas, Bell, and Breckinridge.

Significantly, although the Lilliendahl Collection contained many pieces, including (as Lot 520) a series of William Leggett Bramhall's 1860 medalets,[1] there were *none* of True's pieces. This probably indicates that the True medalets were not in general *numismatic* circulation in 1860-1861, when most of the other pieces in Lilliendahl's cabinet seem to have been gathered.

Curtis Catalogue (1862)

In 1862, John K. Curtis published his *Catalogue of Ancient and Modern Gold, Silver, and Copper Coins and Medals of All Nations Which Are Now Offered for Sale at the Prices Attached to Each.* This 31-page fixed-price offering contained hundreds of tokens and medals, including those of 1858-1860 issue (by Augustus B. Sage,

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eral Union—It must be preserved." John Calhoun's response via toast was, 'The Union—next to our liberty most dear." (Reference: Charles M. Wiltse, *John C. Calhoun, Nullifier, 1828-1839*. Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1949, pp. 70-71; citation furnished by Dr. Harry E. Salyards)

[1] Bramhall, a New York teenaged collector who was a close friend of fellow teenager Augustus B. Sage during the founding of the American Numismatic Society in 1858, got caught up in the medal-issuing craze of 1860 (not discussed in the present "adventure" text except for the issues related to the Wealth of the South), enlisted George H. Lovett and others to prepare an illustrious series of tokens relating to the election of 1860—with his "Hannibal of America" die being of particular interest.

William Leggett Bramhall, *et al.*). Although none of True's presidential candidate medalets were offered, this was included, and at a retail price among the highest for any token of its size:[1]

> Palmetto Tree, Cotton Bales, and Cannon, "No submission to the North, 1860," rev. "The Wealth of the South, Rice, Tobacco, Sugar, Cotton," Brass. $1.00.

Bangs, Merwin & Co. Sale (August 1862)

On August 7, 1862, Bangs, Merwin & Co. offered coins via its *Catalogue of Coins, Medals, and Tokens*, owner or consignor not identified (however, dealer Henry D. Gerdts had a half-page advertisement on the back cover, sharing the page with an advertisement by George H. Lovett). Included were these items:

> Lot 352: Lincoln, Bell, Douglas, and Breck [*sic*], rev. of each, view of the White House,[2] white metal, size 12, 4 [pieces].

Finotti Sale (November 1862)

On November 11-14, 1862, W. Elliot Woodward offered at auction many Wealth of the South tokens and related mulings as part of his *Catalogue of Selected Specimens from the American Portion of THE FINOTTI COLLECTION of Coins and Medals, Now the Property of W. Elliot Woodward, of Roxbury, Mass., to be Sold at Auction by Messrs. Bangs, Merwin & Co., at the Irving Buildings, 594 & 596 Broadway, New York.*

The Rev. Joseph M. Finotti sale is one of the earliest auction offerings containing detailed descriptions of these tokens, although certain die variations had not been recognized yet (such as three dies for Bell, five dies for NO SUBMISSION TO THE NORTH, etc.). It is seen that within this numismatically wonderful panorama most pieces were in copper. No mention is made of plated pieces nor are any pieces described as having holes (although holed pieces most certainly were issued in 1860 for the intended purpose; *i.e.*, serving in the election campaign). Listings follow:[3]

> **Lot 540:** Head to left, "For President, Abraham Lincoln, of Ill.;" rev. President's house. Copper, [size] 14. [Realized 25¢]
>
> **Lot 541:** Like the last, brass. Fine.[4] [25¢]
>
> **Lot 542:** Obv. like last; rev. "No submission to the North." Rare mule piece. [No metal stated] [30¢]
>
> **Lot 543:** Obv. same; rev. "The Wealth of the South—Rice, Tobacco, Sugar, Cotton." [No metal stated] [35¢]
>
> **Lot 544:** Obv. same; rev. Bust of Douglas, facing left. Copper. [25¢]
>
> **Lot 545:** Obv. same; rev. Bust of John Bell, facing left. Copper. [15¢]
>
> **Lot 546:** Obv. same; rev. "The Union must and shall be preserved." Copper. [15¢]
>
> **Lot 547:** Obv. same; rev. "Our rights, The Constitution and the Union." Copper. [15¢]
>
> **Lot 548:** Obv. same; rev. Bust of Lincoln facing left. Copper. [Presumably a muling of two different varieties of the Lincoln die] [10¢]
>
> **Lot 549:** Obv. same; rev. Blank. Copper. [10¢]
>
> **Lot 550:** Obv. same; rev. Stockman & Co.'s card. Copper. [10¢]
>
> **Lot 551:** Obv. same; rev. Elliott, Vinson & Co.'s card. Copper. [10¢]
>
> **Lot 552:** Obv. same; rev. Steamer Lancaster. Copper. [10¢]
>
> **Lot 553:** Obv. same; rev. Cossitt, Hill & Co.'s card. Copper. [10¢]
>
> **Lot 565:** Bust [of Stephen A. Douglas] to left; rev. President's House. Copper. [12¢]
>
> **Lot 566:** Same as last. Brass. [12¢]
>
> **Lot 567:** Same as last. Tin. [12¢]
>
> **Lot 568:** Obv. like last; rev. "No submission to the North." Copper, rare.[5] [12¢]
>
> **Lot 569 :** Obv. like last; rev. "The wealth of the South. Copper, rare. [12¢]
>
> **Lot 570:** Obv. same; rev. Bust of Bell to left. Copper, rare. [12¢]
>
> **Lot 571:** Obv. same; rev. "Our Rights, the Constitution and the Union." Copper, rare. [12¢]
>
> **Lot 572:** Obv. same; rev. "The Union must and shall be preserved." Copper, rare. [10¢]
>
> **Lot 573:** Obv. same; rev. Stockman & Co.'s card. Copper. [10¢]
>
> **Lot 574:** Obv. same; rev. Cossitt, Hill & Co.'s card. Copper. [10¢]
>
> **Lot 575:** Obv. same; rev. Elliott, Vinson & Co.'s card. Copper. [10¢]

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[1] In contrast, Alfred S. Robinson's advertising cards with Higley standing deer obverse were offered at 20¢ each in copper, nickel, brass, and white metal; Sage's Historical Tokens were offered for 25¢ each in copper; and William Bramhall Leggett's Washington medalets (Robbins, Royce & Hard) were offered for 25¢ each in brass and 35¢ in nickel.

[2] At the time it was generally known as the Executive Mansion; official use of the White House term came many years later.

[3] Some descriptions paraphrased and edited here for clarity. Size (14) omitted after first listing; all were designated as size 14 (14/16th of an inch).

[4] Fine meant choice or nice; it did not refer to a specific grade. As will be seen, Woodward's cataloguing was inconsistent; quality was mentioned for some lots, not for others. Proof was used occasionally, although nearly all were probably with Proof finish. Sometimes the metal was not stated. The catalogue was intended as an approximate guide to floor bidders, who were expected to examine the lots in person (or through their agents) to determine their condition.

[5] The first insertion of a rare comment in this series of mulings. The indication of rare in the listings seems to be indiscriminate; some even rarer pieces have no designation.

Lot 576: Obv. same; rev. Steamer Lancaster. Copper. [10¢]

Lot 577: Obv. same; rev. Blank. Copper. [10¢]

Lot 590: Bust [of John Bell] to left, rev. President's House. Copper. [25¢]

Lot 591: Same in brass. [10¢]

Lot 592: Obv. same; rev. "No submission to the North." Copper, fine. [10¢]

Lot 593: Obv. same; rev. "The wealth of the South." Copper. [10¢]

Lot 594: Obv. same; rev. "The Union must and shall be preserved." Copper. [10¢]

Lot 595: Obv. same; rev. "Our Rights, the Constitution and the Union." Copper. [10¢]

Lot 596: Obv. same; rev. Head of Breckinridge[1] to the left. Copper. [10¢]

Lot 597: Obv. same; rev. Cossitt, Hill & Co. Copper. [10¢]

Lot 598: Obv. same; rev. Stockman & Co. Copper. [10¢]

Lot 599: Obv. same; rev. Elliott, Vinson & Co. Copper. [10¢]

Lot 600: Obv. same; rev. Steamer Lancaster. Copper. [10¢]

Lot 601: Obv. same; rev. Blank. Copper. [10¢]

Lot 604: Head [of Breckinridge] to left. Rev. President's House. Copper. [20¢]

Lot 605: Same in brass. [15¢]

Lot 606: Obv. same; rev. "No submission to the North." Copper, rare. [20¢]

Lot 607: Obv. same; rev. "The wealth of the South." Copper, rare. [12¢]

Lot 608: Obv. same; rev. Head of Douglas, facing left. Copper, rare. [12¢]

Lot 609: Obv. same; rev. "The Union must and shall be preserved." Copper, rare. [12¢]

Lot 610: Obv. same; rev. "Our Rights, the Constitution and the Union." [No metal stated] [25¢]

Lot 611: Obv. same; rev. Bust of Lincoln to left. Copper. [12¢]

Lot 612: Obv. same; rev. Cossitt, Hill & Co. Copper. [13¢]

Lot 613: Obv. same; rev. Stockman & Co. Copper. [12¢]

Lot 614: Obv. same; rev. Elliott, Vinson & Co. Copper. [13¢]

Lot 615: Obv. same; rev. Blank. Copper. [12¢]

Lot 631: Obv. President's House, various reverses. A set of four, copper, all fine. [15¢ each]

Lot 632: Palmetto Tree, Cannon, &c., "No Submission to the North," various reverses. A set of five, copper, rare. [15¢ each]

Lot 633: Shield, "The Union must and shall be preserved," various reverses. Five pieces, copper, fine. [7¢ each]

Lot 634: "The Wealth of the South—Rice, Tobacco, Sugar, Cotton;" rev. Blank. Copper, rare. [17¢]

Lot 1061: Elliott, Vinson & Co., Memphis; rev. Shield, Union, &c. copper. [22$^1/_2$¢]

Lot 1062: Elliott, Vinson & Co., rev. President's House; copper. [15¢]

Lot 1063: Like the last; rev. "The wealth of the South." Copper. [20¢]

Lot 1064: Same as last; rev. Cossitt, Hill & Co., Memphis; copper. [25¢]

Lot 1065: Like the last; rev. Steamer Lancaster No. 4. [No metal stated] [20¢]

Lot 1066: Like the last; rev. Stockman & Co., Memphis. [No metal stated] [20¢]

Lot 1067: Like the last; rev. No submission to the North. [No metal stated] [20¢]

Lot 1068: Like the last; rev. Blank. [No metal stated] [20¢]

Lot 1098: Cossitt, Hill & Co., Memphis; rev. "The wealth of the South," copper. [20¢]

Lot 1099: Like the last; rev. President's House; copper. [10¢]

Lot 1100: Cossitt, Hill & Co.; rev. Stockman & Co., Memphis; copper. [17$^1/_2$¢]

Lot 1101: Like the last; rev. "No submission to the North." Copper. [10¢]

Lot 1102: Same as last; rev. U.S. shield; copper. [17$^1/_2$¢]

Lot 1103: Like the last; rev. Blank; copper. [15¢]

Lot 1271: Steamer Lancaster No. 4; rev. President's house; copper, Proof. [10¢]

Lot 1272: Obv. same; rev. shield, "Union," &c. Copper. [15¢]

Lot 1273: Obv. same; rev. "The wealth," &c.; copper. [15¢]

Lot 1274: Obv. same; rev. "No submission," &c.; copper. [15¢]

Lot 1275: Obv. same; rev. Blank; copper, Proof. [15¢]

Lot 1278: Stockman & Co., Memphis; rev. President's House; copper. Proof. [15¢]

Lot 1279: "The wealth," &c.; copper. [15¢]

Lot 1280: Obv. same; rev. "No submission," &c.; copper. [10¢]

Lot 1281: Obv. same; shield, "Union," &c. Copper. Proof. [10¢]

Lot 1282: Obv. same; rev. Steamer Lancaster. Copper. Proof. [10¢]

Lot 1283: Obv. same; rev. Blank; copper, Proof. [10¢]

Woodward's Sale (April-May 1863)

From April 28 to May 1, 1863, Woodward offered at auction selections from the cabinets of Henry M. Brooks, Jeremiah Colburn, Rev. J.M. Finotti, Dr. Edward M. Field, and Dr. Augustine Shurtleff, "now the property of W. Elliot Woodward."

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[1] Misspelled as "Breckenridge" by Woodward; here and elsewhere in the catalogue.

The sale included numerous Wealth of the South and related political pieces and introduced the Excelsior Tobacco Works and Weighell issues (not in the Finotti sale of 1862). Note that most pieces are in copper, and that none are holed. The absence of holed pieces probably indicates that most if not all of these were "numismatic delicacies," not political or Wealth of the South tokens actually fished out of circulation or the public's hands. Such terms as "fine" and "very fine" meant "nice," "very nice," etc., and did not refer to specific coin grades as used in later times. Most of the tokens were probably in Mint State. Listings (edited):

Lot 744: Bust [of Lincoln] to left., rev. President's house. Copper. Very fine, [size] 14. [Realized 10¢]

Lot 745: Same in brass, equally fine. [20¢]

Lot 746: Same in tin, fine. [10¢]

Lot 747: Obv. like last; rev. bust of Bell facing left; copper, fine and very scarce. [15¢]

Lot 748: Same obv.; rev. has bust of Douglas; copper, fine, scarce. [12¢]

Lot 749: Bust to left, rev. plain, copper, fine. [10¢]

Lot 750: Obv. same; rev. "No submission to the North;" copper, fine. [15¢]

Lot 751: Obv. same; rev. "The Wealth of the South;" copper. [15¢]

Lot 752: Obv. same; rev. "Our rights, the Constitution and the Union;" copper. [15¢]

Lot 753: Bust [of Lincoln] to left, rev. card of "Excelsior Tobacco Works;" copper, Proof, very rare.[1] [25¢]

Lot 754: Obv. same; rev. "Good for 20 cents in Tobacco;" [this is the Weighell token] copper, Proof, very rare. [25¢]

Lot 755: Obv. same; rev. "Steamer Lancaster;" copper, fine. [7¢]

Lot 756: Obv. same; rev. "Elliott, Vinson & Co.;" copper, fine [7¢]

Lot 781: Bust [of Stephen A. Douglas] to left, rev. President's house; copper, Proof. [10¢]

Lot 782: Same in brass. [15¢]

Lot 783: Same in brass. [10¢]

Lot 784: Obv. same; rev. plain; copper. [12¢]

Lot 785: Obv. same; rev. "The Wealth of the South," copper. [15¢]

Lot 786: Obv. same; rev. "Our rights, the Constitution," copper. [15¢]

Lot 787: Obv. same; rev. "The Union," &c., copper. [15¢]

Lot 788: Obv. same; rev. "No submission to the North," copper. [15¢]

Lot 789: Obv. same; rev. "Steamer Lancaster," copper. [15¢]

Lot 790: Obv. same; rev. "Stockman & Co.," copper. [15¢]

Lot 811: Bust [of John Bell] to left, rev. President's house; copper, fine. [10¢]

Lot 812: Same in brass. [10¢]

Lot 813: Same in tin. [10¢]

Lot 814: Obv. same; rev. Douglas; copper, fine. [20¢]

Lot 815: Obv. same; rev. "No submission," &c.; copper. [6¢]

Lot 816: Obv. same; rev. "The Wealth of the South;" copper. [6¢]

Lot 817: Obv. same; rev. "The Union," &c., copper. [6¢]

Lot 818: Obv. same; rev. "The Constitution," copper. [6¢]

Lot 819: Obv. same; rev. plain. copper. [6¢]

Lot 820: Obv. same; rev. "Our rights," &c., copper. [12¢]

Lot 821: Obv. same; rev. "Good for 20 cents;" [Weighell token], rare. copper. [12¢]

Lot 822: Obv. same; rev. "Elliott, Vinson & Co.," copper. [12¢]

Lot 823: Obv. same; rev. "Stockman & Co.," copper. [12¢]

Lot 824: Obv. same; rev. "Cossitt, Hill & Co.," copper. [12¢]

Lot 825: Obv. same; rev. "Steamer Lancaster," copper. [10¢]

Lot 834: Bust [of Breckinridge] to left, rev. Presidents house; copper, fine. [12¢]

Lot 835: Same in brass, fine. [20¢]

Lot 836: Same in tin, fine. [8¢]

Lot 837: Obv. same; rev. Lincoln; rare, copper. [15¢]

Lot 838: Obv. same; rev. John Bell, rare, copper. [12¢]

Lot 839: Obv. same; rev. "No submission," &c.; copper. [10¢]

Lot 840: Obv. same; rev. "The Union," &c., copper. [7¢]

Lot 841: Obv. same; rev. "Our rights," &c., copper. [7¢]

Lot 842: Obv. same; rev. blank, copper. [7¢]

Lot 843: Obv. same; rev. "Steamer Lancaster," copper. [7¢]

Lot 844: Obv. same; rev. "Cossitt, Hill & Co.," copper. [7¢]

Lot 845: Obv. same; rev. "Stockman & Co.," copper. [7¢]

Lot 846: Obv. same; rev. "Elliott, Vinson & Co.," copper. [7¢]

Lot 901: Secession Medallet; three pieces, copper, brass, and tin, all Proofs, [size] 14. [10¢ each]

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[1] This is the first time that the term "very rare" was used by Woodward in connection with tokens in this series.

Lot 902: "The Wealth of the South—Rice, Tobacco," &c.; a set of four, all different reverses, copper. [7¢ each]

Lot 903: President's house; 4 pieces, different reverses, copper. [7¢ each]

Lot 904: "The Union must and shall be preserved;" two varieties, copper. [5¢ each]

Lot 905: "Our rights, the Constitution," &c.; three varieties, copper. [5¢ each]

Lot 1408: Elliott, Vinson & Co.; rev. plain; copper. [12¢]

Lot 1409: The same, differently struck,[1] copper. [12¢]

Lot 1410: Elliott, Vinson & Co.; rev. "The Wealth of the South;" copper. [12¢]

Lot 1411: Elliott, Vinson & Co.; rev. "No submission," &c.; copper. [12¢]

Lot 1412: Elliott, Vinson & Co.; rev. "The Union," &c.; copper. [12¢]

Lot 1413: Elliott, Vinson & Co.; rev. President's house, copper. [14¢]

Lot 1414: Elliott, Vinson & Co.; rev. shield, copper. [14¢]

Lot 1415: Excelsior Tobacco Works, Cincinnati, copper, Proof.[2] [12¢]

Lot 1416: The same; rev. "The Wealth of the South;" copper, Proof. [13¢]

Lot 1460: Cossitt, Hill & Co., Memphis, Tenn.[3] Copper. [13¢]

Lot 1461: Obv. like last; rev. different; copper. [12¢]

Lot 1715: Steamer Lancaster; rev. "The Wealth," &c., copper, fine. [12¢]

Lot 1716: Obv. same; rev. "shield, "Union," &c.; copper, fine. [12¢]

Lot 1717: Obv. same; rev. President's house, copper, Proof. [12¢]

Lot 1718: Obv. same; rev. "No submission," &c.; copper, Proof. [12¢]

Lot 1719: Obv. same; rev. "Our rights," &c.; copper, Proof. [12¢]

Lot 1720: Obv. same; rev. "Elliott, Vinson & Co.;" copper, Proof. [12¢]

Lot 1721: Obv. same; rev. blank; copper, Proof. [12¢]

Lot 1722: Obv. same; rev. bust of Breckinridge, copper, Proof. [12¢]

Lot 1723: Stockman & Co., 159 Main St., Memphis, copper, Proof. [12¢]

Lot 1724: Obv. same; rev. different; copper, Proof. [12¢]

Lot 1794: Weighell & Son, "Good for 20 cts. in tobacco,"[4] copper, Proof, rare. [15¢]

Lot 1795: Weighell & Son, different rev.,[5] copper, Proof. [15¢]

Woodward Sale (October 1863)

W. Elliot Woodward's sale of October 20-24, 1863, held by Messrs. Bangs, Merwin & Co., New York City, included these items:

Lot 1690: Bust [of Lincoln] to left; rev. President's house, copper, Proof, [size] 14.[6] [Realized 25¢]

Lot 1691: Same in brass, fine and scarce. [15¢]

Lot 1692: Same in tin, equally fine. [15¢]

Lot 1693: Obv. same; rev. bust of Bell facing left, copper, Proof, rare. [15¢]

Lot 1707: Bust [of Douglas] to left; rev. President's house, copper, Proof. [12¢]

Lot 1708: Same in tin, Proof. [13¢]

Lot 1709: Obv. same; rev. shield, copper, Proof. [10¢]

Lot 1723: Bust [of Breckinridge] to left; rev. President's house, copper. Proof. [13¢]

Lot 1724: Same in brass. [12¢]

Lot 1725: Same in tin. [13¢]

Lot 1764: Shield, "The Union must and shall be preserved," different reverse[s], two pieces, copper. [10¢ each]

Lot 1765: Shield, "Our Rights," &c., different reverses, two pieces, copper. [10¢ each]

Woodward Sale (March 1865)

In W.E. Woodward's sale of the Bache, Bertsch, Lightbody, Lilliendahl, Vinton, and Watson Collections, March 20-25, 1865, held at the Trade Sale Rooms of J.E. Cooley, New York City, the following were included:[7]

Lot 2412: Head [of Lincoln] to left; rev. "President's House;" silver, Proof, rare. [Size] 13.[8] [Realized $1.50 to Jerome]

Lot 2413: Same as the last, brass Proof. [10¢ to Lalter]

Lot 2414: Same as the last, silver-plated Proof. [10¢ to Lalter]

Lot 2434: Bust [of Douglas]; rev. "President's House;" plated Proof, [size] 14.[9] [10¢ to Lalter]

Lot 2435: Same as the last; brass Proof. [10¢ to Lalter]

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[1] No further information is known concerning the difference.

[2] No separate description is given of the reverse.

[3] No indication of reverse die description.

[4] No separate description is given of the reverse.

[5] No separate description is given of the reverse.

[6] Size omitted in further citations given here.

[7] The term "trade sale room" was used by several auction firms in the larger eastern cities and referred to the use of these rooms to auction recently-printed books, prints, and other merchandise. During the era, book publishers would auction large wholesale lots of new products to agents for book stores, department stores, and others, who would come to acquire inventory.

[8] Subsequent Lincoln pieces described as size 13; all such medalets of the 1860 candidates were, in fact, of the same diameter.

[9] Both Douglas medalets were described as size 14, the size designation usually employed by Woodward for this series.

Lot 2438: Bust [of Bell] to left; rev. "President's House;" plated Proof, [size] 14. [10¢ to Lalter]

The Levick Sale (May 1884)

On May 26-29, 1884, W. Elliot Woodward offered at auction via catalogue the collection of Joseph N.T. Levick, the well-known specialist in tokens, medals, and store cards. Levick had been at the game since discovering the appeal of the series in 1860, shortly after moving from Philadelphia to New York. He was on the scene in New York City when certain numismatic tokens and mulings were made for collectors, and he created many for his own account (such as the Woodgate & Co. mulings). Certain of these had come from Woodward's November 11-16, 1878, sale of the great collection of Henry W. Holland, of Boston.

Levick pursued his hobby aggressively, and contacted various diecutters and token issuers to obtain sets and special strikings. The offering of the following pieces in the 1884 sale, per Woodward's descriptions, gives a numismatic view of the issues at the time:

WEALTH OF THE SOUTH SERIES

Lot 1618: Cotton, tobacco, rice and sugar cane growing. "The wealth of the South"; rev., a palmetto tree with a cannon at its foot; "No submission to the North"; copper; Proof. This and all of the series are size 14. [Realized 50¢]

About the time that the war broke out these pieces were discovered, and as the date, 1860, preceded the commencement of hostilities, much indignation was expressed that the South, in anticipation of secession, should have issued this token. It was presently discovered that it was the work of a Cincinnati die-sinker, and that it had not been thought of until the war was well under way.[1]

Lot 1619: The same; brass and tin; Proofs. 2 pieces. [20¢]

Lot 1620: "No submission to the North"; rev., the same; struck between two reverse dies; copper; fine, *extremely rare.* [20¢]

Lot 1621: The same; rev. plain; copper, Proof. [10¢]

Lot 1622: The same; rev., shield, "Our rights," etc.; copper, Very Fine. [15¢]

Lot 1623: "The Wealth of the South"; rev., like the last; copper, brass, and tin; Very Fine. 3 pieces. [11¢]

Lot 1624: The same; rev., shield, "The Union must and shall be preserved"; copper, perfect. [13¢]

Lot 1625: The same; rev., plain; copper, Proof. [1¢]

Lot 1626: The same; rev., President's house; copper, Proof. [12¢]

Lot 1627: The same; rev., card of Stockman & Co., Memphis; copper and brass; perfect. 2 pieces. [10¢ each]

Lot 1628: The same; rev., Elliott, Vinson & Co.; copper, Proof. [12¢]

Lot 1629: The same; rev., "Steamer Lancaster"; copper, perfect. [12¢]

Lot 1630: Palmetto tree; "No submission"; rev., card of Stockman & Co.; copper and brass; perfect. 2 pieces. [12¢ each]

Lot 1631: The same; rev., card of Elliott, Vinson & Co.; copper, Proof. [15¢]

Lot 1632: Bust of Lincoln facing right; rev., card of Elliott, Vinson & Co., Stockman & Co., Cossitt, Hill & Co., and others. As but few of this series was struck, the Presidential pieces are all very rare; copper; perfect. 5 pieces. [27¢ each]

Lot 1633: Bust of Stephen A. Douglas; revs., like the preceding; copper; Very Fine and *rare.* 4 pieces. [6¢ each]

Lot 1634: Bust of Bell; revs., like the preceding; copper; *rare.* 4 pieces. [8¢ each]

Lot 1635: Bust of John C. Breckinridge; revs., like the preceding; copper and brass; perfect, *rare.* 5 pieces. [8¢ each]

Lot 1636: Stockman & Co., 159 Main Street, Memphis; rev., President's house, shield, etc.; all different; copper; perfect. 10 pieces. [9¢ each]

Lot 1637: Cossitt, Hill & Co.; copper and brass, all different; fine. 5 pieces. [12¢ each]

Lot 1638: Steamer Lancaster; President's house, shield, etc.; copper; perfect. 3 pieces. [9¢ each]

Lot 1639: Elliott, Vinson & Co.; various reverses; copper and brass; perfect. 5 pieces. [10¢ each]

Lot 1640: President's house, shield, etc.; all different; various reverses; copper. 5 pieces. [8¢ each]

Fuld Collection (April 1966)

At the risk of devoting too much space to these tokens, I jump forward many decades to mention that on April 1, 1966, Lester Merkin, 515 Madison Avenue, New York City, auctioned the Dr. George Fuld collection of Wealth of the South mulings, "76 lots of 116 different pieces representing the largest group of these pieces known."

George J. Fuld, a fine friend for many years, had by this time studied the Wealth of the South tokens more intensely than anyone else, and his study in the *Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine,* September 1958, stood as the standard reference on the series.

Upon the brows of George J. Fuld and his father Melvin can be laid the laurels for scholarship in the Civil War token series as of the 1960s, setting the foundation that led to the enjoyment of the series by many and to the establishment of the Civil War Token Society.

Any work I have done or continue to do on the Wealth of the South series builds upon the immense legacy of the Fulds.

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[1] As noted earlier in the present "adventure" text, Woodward's time line has no basis in fact.

ADVENTURE NO. 35

THE 1856 FLYING EAGLE CENT

The famous 1856 Flying Eagle cent, one of the most popular of all American rarities.

Getting Started

There are coins and there are coins, and for me one with special memories is the 1856 Flying Eagle cent.[1]

When I was a young teenager in 1952 and first became interested in coins, I read all I could about them. This was not hard to do, as at first I only had one volume in my library-to-be, the *Guide Book of U.S. Coins*. I am not exaggerating to say that within a year I could recall from memory most of the text information and could also discuss, more or less knowledgeably, many different rarities.

There was a problem: although I was well read (within the parameters of the *Guide Book*), I had seen but few actual *rare* coins. Thus, I knew them well in theory, but not in practice.

Each month the *Numismatic Scrapbook* arrived in the mail, and once each month I dropped everything and read it from cover to cover—except for information about foreign coins (which at the time had not captured my interest). I kept learning.

As a budding entrepreneur I tried to make money in different ways—by delivering prescriptions for a local drug store, by substituting on a friend's paper route, by gardening, by shoveling snow, by netting frogs in a marsh and selling them to a scientific supply house, and, one time, by starting my own "scrap drive" by going around the neighborhood collecting old pipes, metal grates, and other such things. All of these activities plus my "allowance" yielded perhaps $25 to $50 per week in spending money. Nearly all of this went into my newfound hobby.

From the very start I spent most of my budget on books. As an attendee of the Wilkes-Barre (Pennsylvania) Coin Club I soon found that copies of the *Scrapbook* and *The Numismatist* for the preceding 10 to 20 years were free for the asking—most old-timers were happy to give them away. Used copies of Raymond's old *Standard Catalogue* were a dollar or two each at most. Virtually no one collected old auction catalogues, and once my interest became known, I was given hundreds of Mehl, Bolender, Elder, Stack's, Hollinbeck, and other companies' publications.

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[1] Adapted from my "Joys of Collecting" column, *Coin World*, January and February 2001.

My Favorite Rarity

After I was a "numismatist" for about a year, I determined that my very favorite rarity was the 1856 Flying Eagle cent. By that time my library was worthy of the name and occupied several shelves of books and catalogues, nearly all of which had been read through or at least skimmed. And, there was a lot to read about the 1856, as it had been famous for a long time. However, I had never *seen* one.

Then at one meeting of the coin club Dr. Albert Thomas, a well-to-do physician who collected large copper cents, Flying Eagle and Indian cents, and many other things, brought his "National" album to display. Although it contained one each of the three major types of 1793 cents and even the very rare 1799, what caught my eye was the pale yellow 1856 Flying Eagle. How wondrous to actually see one! And then he pushed it out of its album hole, and I held it by the edges. I was in heaven![1]

Of course, I just simply had to own one! By that time I had been put on the mailing lists of the leading dealers of the time, a listing that included Numismatic Gallery (Abe Kosoff and Abner Kreisberg), Stack's, Hollinbeck (A.M. and Paul Kagin), French's (Charles and Arline French, Troy, New York), New Netherlands Coin Co. (John J. Ford, Jr., and Charles M. Wormser), and a handful of others. Also, by that time I was a "dealer," sort of, and had run a number of advertisements to buy and sell coins. I even had a nice inventory worth, perhaps, $1,000 to $2,000. "Big deal!" you might say, but at that time a *Proof* Indian cent was worth, perhaps, $2.50 to $4, and a gold $5 half eagle was worth about $10. Probably the same inventory today would cost 100 times as much!

Fast forward some more, to September 1954. By this time I had seen several 1856 Flying Eagle cents, had attended a few conventions (such as those held by the Empire State Numismatic Association in New York), and was as well-read as almost anyone I knew. Not only had I memorized the *Guide Book*, but I also knew many Adams-Woodin pattern numbers by heart, had read Sheldon at least two or three times, and owned nearly complete runs of *The Numismatist* and the *American Journal of Numismatics* and had read them.

But, I still had not owned an 1856 Flying Eagle cent.

Record High Price!

In September or early October 1954 I decided to take the plunge. I called Stack's, the New York City rare coin company. I was put through to Harvey Stack, who at that time must have been in charge of receiving telephone inquiries from non-important buyers such as I. His father, Morton Stack, and his uncle, Joseph, ran the company. Harvey tended counter and did other things, and I believe that Harvey's cousin Norman usually was involved with cataloguing. Ben Stack was around, too, and specialized in interfacing with important clients.

In any event, Harvey was cheery and asked what I had in mind. I inquired as to the availability and price of an 1856 Flying Eagle cent, figuring that if any dealer had one, Stack's would. The conversation went something like this:

"I have a nice Proof, but I have to get $310 for it. I know this is not a 'dealer's price,' but one just sold for a lot of money in our Anderson-Dupont Sale, and I paid a lot when I bought it."

Although I take pride in remembering a lot of obscure things, as I write these words I don't recall whether I bought this piece. However, within a year or two I handled at least two or three others, and as my little dealership grew, I always kept a weather eye out for nice 1856 Flying Eagle cents. Even today, these coins are favorites—although a nice Proof is likely to cost on the long side of $10,000. The days of $310 prices are gone!

More about the 1856 Flying Eagle

Not only is the 1856 Flying Eagle cent a popular rarity today, but it also has an element of mystery. No one knows how many were struck. Guesses have varied from a few hundred up to several thousand. The story runs something like this....

In 1856 the Mint decided to abandon the old copper "large" cent and adopt a small-size format, a new size for which four coins, if placed side to side, would measure three inches. A number of metal alloys were considered.

An alloy called "copper-nickel" was adopted, consisting of 12 parts nickel and 88 parts copper. The nickel gave the coins a golden yellow appearance, in contrast to the orange of the copper cent. It was planned to make these coins in large quantities beginning in 1856. In the meantime, some 1856-dated patterns were struck to see what the design looked like.

Several generations of Americans had grown up with the traditional copper cents, and thus the Mint thought that the small copper-nickel version would take some getting used to. Accordingly, it was decided to send examples of the 1856 patterns to congressmen, senators, newspaper editors, and others of influence. In the National Archives in the early 1950s Walter Breen located information that distribution included the following:

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[1] Upon reading a draft of this text, Dr. Harry E. Salyards commented: "Thirty five years later I had a nearly identical experience at my coin club in Pennsylvania. Dr. Nelson Page Aspen was chief among those who shared their books and knowledge with me."

264 pieces or more to congressmen.
200 to Representative S.D. Campbell.
102 to Secretary of the Treasury James Guthrie.
62 to senators.
4 to President Franklin Pierce.
2 to the Mint Cabinet.

In addition to the above 634 coins, additional pieces were given to dignitaries, the Mint staff, interested numismatists, and others. Walter Breen declared that an additional "several hundred were held in stock in the Mint for later distribution to coin collectors, or to trade them for Washington medals for the Mint Cabinet."

How Many Were Minted?

Assuming that Breen's "several hundred" means 300 or 400, this adds up to a mintage of about 1,000 pieces, more or less.

However, it is generally conceded that well over 1,500 pieces exist today. How come?

Further, as quite a few coins minted in 1856 must have strayed or have been "spent," if over 1,500 exist today, it seems reasonable that over 2,000 were struck.

Publicity

Indeed, it is likely that about 1,000 were struck in 1856 and also from 1856-dated dies in early 1857. These coins, with lustrous ("Mint State" rather than "Proof") surfaces, were widely distributed. Probably, most editors of important newspapers received an example as an introduction to the new, small copper-nickel cent that was soon to replace the old copper "large" cent. In looking through old-time newspapers of the era I have come across three (so far) illustrations published in 1857, showing an 1856 Flying Eagle cent and discussing its innovative nature.

In February 1857 the presses stopped making copper half cents and cents. The era of these pieces, familiar since childhood to most American citizens, came to an end. The nation awaited the new Flying Eagle cents, which eventually made their debut on May 25, 1857, by which time millions had been struck—thus assuring an ample supply at the outset.

Soon, America had a case of nostalgia. These "old coppers" would be gone. Sentiments were expressed in letters to newspaper editors, and in newspapers in New York, Boston, and elsewhere, and in the newly founded *Historical Magazine* some inquiries were printed about old coins.

Hunting for Copper Cents

By summer 1857 the new Flying Eagle cent was a reality, and the old copper cents were fast disappearing. Meanwhile, many citizens looked through their pocket change, in drawers, and in other places and endeavored to find as many different dates as possible. Believe it or not, there were even some well-worn 1793 Chain copper cents still to be found (as reported by Dr. Montroville W. Dickeson in his 1859 book, *American Numismatical Manual*).

Coin collecting was born as a popular American hobby. Prior to 1857, interest had been limited to, perhaps, a couple hundred people. Now, thousands collected!

What could be found in the way of copper cents in 1857? Well, I have no way of knowing, but piecing together a lot of information from here and there, I guess that all of the dates from 1816 to 1856 could be found, with the possible exception of the 1823—which to this very day remains very hard to find. Somewhat scarce would have been the 1821. The 1857 would have been almost or completely impossible to find. I am not sure

Fashions of the era of the 1856 Flying Eagle cent. These dresses were ideal for a stroll in the park. ("The Old Mill," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, April 1857) that more than a few thousand were ever put into general circulation. However, collectors became aware of them, and it seems likely that many were found at banks or obtained from the Mint.

Most collectors of 1857 were not aware of such interesting varieties as the 1817 15-stars cent (one of my favorites!), the much-rarer-than-usually-considered 1824/2 overdate, or the "Silly Head," "Booby Head," and other varieties of 1839. Nor were "large letters" vs. "small letters" or "large date" and "small date" varieties collected.

Few people cared about grading, and only the most general terms were used ("Good," "Fine," "Very Fine," and "Uncirculated" were popular designations used by curio dealers and novelty shops). Once a cent of 1819, or 1835, or 1842 was acquired, then that "position" was filled, and it was on to find something else.

Early Dealers

There were no more than a half dozen dealers active in America, and all of them handled coins in conjunction with other collectible items such as prints, autographs, and ancient artifacts. In New York City, John Allan, Charles B. Norton (prominent as a bookseller), John Brock (chiefly a watchmaker), and John K. Curtis maintained stocks of coins for sale, while in Boston there was Henry Cook.

In Baltimore to the south, John P. DesForges had been active as a collector and part-time dealer for a long while. In the late 1840s, John Brady owned the Old Maryland Curiosity Shop, 105 East Baltimore Street, in the same metropolis, which proclaimed itself as: "Oldest established in the city, where may be obtained rare old books, coins, medals, autographs, documents, shells, minerals, etc.... Old books and coins bought. School books, stationery, old music, and plays."

By 1855, the Appley (or Applee) brothers operated the similarly-named Old Curiosity Shop in the Arcade, Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, and dealt in books, paintings, coins, and antiquities.

No coin collector had ever heard of Edward Cogan, who later falsely claimed to be America's first important coin dealer (Cogan did not start dealing in coins until autumn 1858)—perhaps setting the tempo for professional exaggeration, a popular practice even today!

Becoming a "Numismatologist"

Word of the excitement of coin collecting spread. Soon, quite a few people were calling themselves "numismatologists" and designating their specialty as "numismatology." The terms we use today, *numismatists* and *numismatics* did not become widely popular until later years.

In 1857 there were no coin clubs, no guides to coin values, no system of grading, no coin conventions, and only a few dealers. And yet, enthusiasm continued at a fever pitch.

After finding cents dating back to 1816, collectors sought earlier dates, back to the beginning in 1793. Not everyone knew that there were no 1815-dated cents made, nor was it generally realized that the 1799 would be almost impossible to find. Information could be obtained only in bits and pieces, here and there—such as in newspaper articles and inquiries.

1856 Cents in Demand

When numismatics became a wildly popular hobby in 1857, the attention of collectors was drawn to the new Flying Eagle cent. It was soon realized that such cents, if dated 1856, were *rare*. About 1,000 had been struck in 1856 and early 1857 as patterns and, primarily, for distribution to newspaper editors, congressmen, and others of influence—to acquaint them with the new-style cent, the replacement for the copper "large" cents of generations past.

It is likely that collectors who applied to the Philadelphia Mint were able to purchase 1856 cents on request. When the supply ran out, it is likely that more were made. (Walter Breen and Rick Snow have identified several die combinations; Don Taxay was among the first to publish certain information about restriking, including the following citation.)

Correspondence with a Collector

Fast forward to early 1859. On January 22, a collector, P. Clayton, wrote to James Ross Snowden, director of the Mint:

> Dear Sir,
>
> If you have specimens in copper of the new $20, also model half & quarter dollars & specimen cents struck last year before settling on the new device now used—& can spare them without detriment to the public interest, I would like to have them—My object is to give them to a friend who seems to have a passion for specimens of coins.

Snowden replied on January 24, 1859, with the notation "Unofficial" at the top of the letter:

> Dear Sir,
>
> I have received your note of the 22nd inst. and learn from it that you are acquiring a personal knowledge of

> the "passion for specimen coins" which possesses so many people in our country.
>
> On Saturday I had nine applications of a similar character—today (now 12 o'clock) I have had three. It was in view of this increasing, as well as troublesome, taste that I made the request mentioned in my official letter of last Saturday (22nd inst.) which I hope will deserve the sanction of the department.
>
> In reference to the specimens you ask for I have to state that the trial piece in copper of the double eagle of 1859 which I left at the Department is the only one I had: I have a few of the specimen cents but not all the varieties. I could send you two or three of these, but perhaps it will be best to defer sending them until the new arrangement is made, when your friend, and all other collectors of Coins, AND THEIR NAME IS LEGION, can be supplied to their heart's content.

Restriking

By this time Chief Coiner Franklin Peale (who had been fired in 1854 for misappropriation of Mint facilities and assets for his personal use) and his successor as chief coiner, George K. Childs, per the laconic observation of Don Taxay, "had prophetically taken to collecting the old hubs and dies, and had amassed a representative stock dating back to about 1800. Thus, when John K. Curtis wrote to Director Snowden, early in January 1859, regarding the possibility of obtaining an 1851 dollar, Snowden replied that 'one could be struck from the dies of that year.'"

The Curious Events of Spring 1859

What happened in late winter and early spring of 1859 must be largely left to the imagination. However, private records, such as those kept in a personal notebook by George J. Eckfeldt, reveal that such items as 1836 Gobrecht dollars were restruck at this time.

There we have it: Director Snowden proposes the expanded restriking of coins (which by that time had been going on for quite a while, but now there was a wider market) for use in augmenting the Mint's own collection. The 1856 Flying Eagle cent was a natural favorite for restriking.

A Favorite Rarity

Today, I estimate that over 1,500 1856 Flying Eagle cents are known. Like rabbits, they multiplied rapidly after 1856! Allowing for loss and damage, this might indicate that well over 2,000 were minted. This restriking is believed by me to have continued as late as the early 1870s. Some others think it concluded in the 1860s.

It was "nice" of the Mint to make so many pieces. As these coins were widely available they were often listed in catalogues and price lists of the late nineteenth century. When reference books were issued, the 1856 Flying Eagle cent, a pattern, was usually listed among the regular issues.

Today you will find the 1856 Flying Eagle cent listed just about everywhere, including in the ubiquitous *Guide Book of U.S. Coins*. While there may be over 1,500 specimens known, this is still a small number in comparison to the millions of numismatists who would love to own an example of this famous and favorite rarity.

Washington Medals to the Fore

About this time, spring 1859, Snowden's favorite numismatic specialty became tokens and medals relating to George Washington, and to this end he set about with fervor building a display of these within the Mint Cabinet (being the official collection begun at the Mint in June 1838 and continued since that time).[1] The Cabinet had only four or five items pertaining to the Father of Our Country.

During this time Edward Cogan, a British immigrant who had operated a curio and art shop in Philadelphia and who recently had decided to become a rare coin dealer, sought to learn about restriking. Perhaps he had heard that William K. Idler, also a newcomer to the coin trade, had been able to secure specimens. In any event, on June 14, 1859, Cogan wrote to Director Snowden:

> I have been applied to by a great many collectors of American coins wishing to be informed whether the report now current—that there are many of the pattern cents being restruck at the Mint for the purpose of exchanging them for Washington pieces is true—the only answer I can give is that the many pieces shown me lately would tend to confirm the report.
>
> A rumor of this kind uncontradicted will tend to depreciate the value of every fine piece in whatever collection it may be found and I should be glad if you would give it the most unqualified denial.

Snowden gave a somewhat indirect but very revealing reply:

> It is quite true that I have caused a number of pattern or specimen cents to be struck for the purpose of exchanging them for Washington pieces whenever opportunities to do so occur.
>
> If you possess any Washington pieces I would be much obliged if you will send me a list of them, and if there are any among them which I desire for the Cabi-

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[1] See related Washington commentary under Adventure No. 13.

net I would be pleased to procure them by giving you in exchange other interesting medals or coins.

Numismatic Delicacies

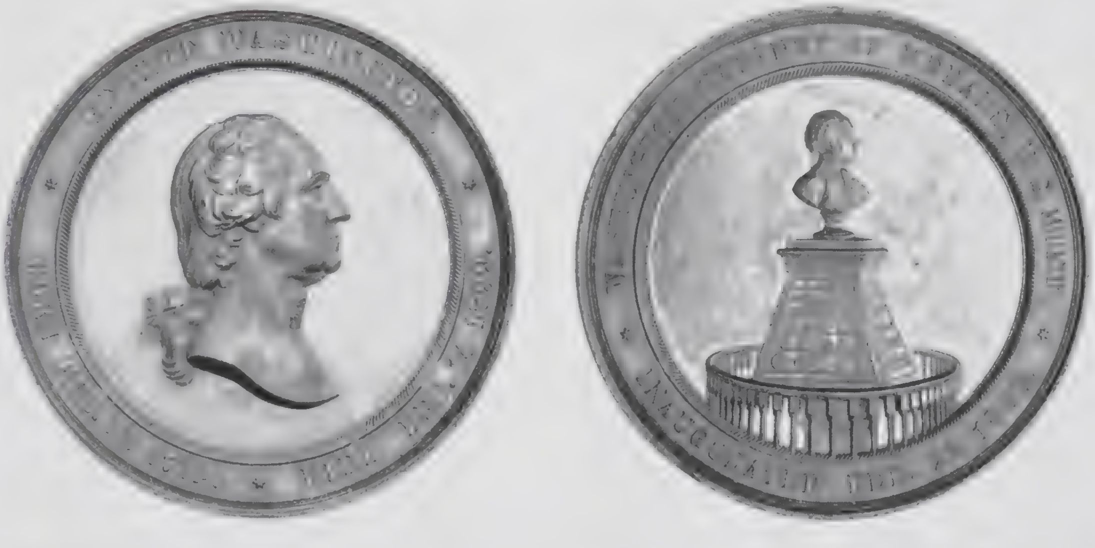
In the spring and summer of 1859, Mint Director James Ross Snowden offered such numismatic delicacies as recognized rarities, Proofs, patterns, and low-mintage coins to collectors and dealers in exchange for Washington medals and other desired items. Such trades were pleasing to Mint officials and collectors alike. By this process and by selected purchases, the Washington display was increased from a nucleus of "four or five specimens" to 138 pieces by February 1860, when on the 22nd of the month there was a special ceremony to dedicate the Washington Cabinet part of the Mint display.

Snowden sponsored, lent his name to the title pages, and partially wrote two excellent books, each elegantly illustrated, *Description of Ancient and Modern Coins in the Cabinet Collection of the Mint of the United States*, published in 1860, and, in 1861, *A Description of the Medals of Washington: The Medallic Memorials of Washington in the Mint of the United States.* In an era in which there was very little literature on United States coins and related pieces, these two works were well received. Even today both books can be reviewed for the excellent information they contain. Among the desiderata of that era, a variety described by Snowden, was the Eccleston medal of 1805 featuring Washington, described in the present text as Adventure No. 22.

Spring 1859 marks the beginning of the great period of Mint secrecy. Few records were kept as to the restrikes made, and often disinformation was given out—such as the comment made later, that in 1869 all old dies were destroyed when, in fact, they were not. This gap in the records exists for all years through early 1885.

Snowden left the Mint in early 1861 and was replaced by James Pollock, who, with his successors, kept the veil in place. Only in modern times—starting in a significant way with the research of Walter Breen, circa 1950, have numismatists been able to piece together what might have happened.

Today, we know that a half dozen or more die combinations exist of the 1856 Flying Eagle cent, and it is believed that for a long period of time—extending through the 1860s—these were a stock in trade item, a handy source of profit, for certain insiders at the Mint.



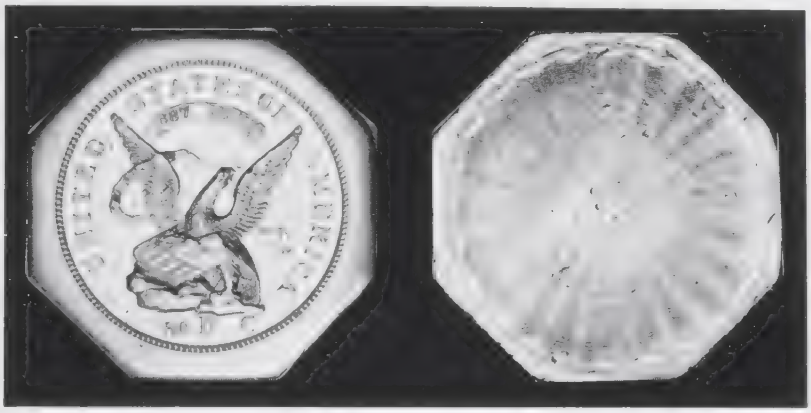
From dies by Anthony Paquet, this 59.8 mm. medal was issued on February 22, 1860, at the dedication of the Washington Cabinet of Medals as part of the Mint Collection. Additional specimens in copper and silver were made available to the public.

The obverse depicts President Washington after the famous bust by Jean Antoine Houdon, the image found on most all Washington tokens and medals issued during this era by the Mint as well as by private medalists. The reverse features the Washington Cabinet and illustrates a bust of Washington atop a four-sided display cabinet. Some 35 medals and tokens are shown on the side facing the viewer, and another 20 are on the panel at the right. (Andrew Zabriskie Collection specimen; Sotheby's 2000; Bowers and Merena Galleries 2001)

ADVENTURE NO. 36

THE INCREDIBLE 1851 CALIFORNIA $50 SLUG

Augustus Humbert, Assayer



The 1851 $50 "slug" with lettered edge was minted under the supervision of Augustus Humbert, United States Assayer of Gold, California. The making of such pieces was a painstaking process involving over a dozen steps—perhaps the most complicated production of any single coin variety in American numismatics!

* * *

The California Coinage Scene

The Gold Rush, which began with the discovery of precious metal in the tail race of Sutter's Mill on the American River, California, January 24, 1848, began in earnest in 1849. From the outset, there was lots of commercial and other activity in San Francisco, Sacramento, and other cities and towns, but not enough coins to supply the demand.

Beginning in the spring of 1849, Norris, Gregg & Norris, a New York City firm that had sent certain partners to California, minted gold coins at Benicia, a town on San Francisco Bay. In the summer, Moffat & Co. joined the ranks of private minters, and by year's end several others were involved as well.

While there had been requests to establish a federal mint in California, no positive action was forthcoming. However, in late 1850 the Treasury Department signed a contract with one of the more prominent private minters and assayers, Moffat & Co., to produce coins under contract. Augustus Humbert, a New York City watchmaker and metallurgist, was appointed as U.S. Assayer of Gold, California, and went to San Francisco to be in residence at Moffat & Co. and to supervise proceedings.

While coins of all denominations remained in short supply in early 1851, Moffat was not given permission to strike $5, $10, or $20 pieces, despite its request to do so. Instead, authorization was for $50 coins, a value not heretofore made in coin form.

In the meantime, early in 1851 a flood of $5 (mostly), $10, and $20 coins from Moffat's competitors, including Baldwin, Dunbar, and Schultz, eased the strain in general commerce and in gambling halls, but import duties remained a problem, as private coins were not accepted at the Custom House.

New Coins Legal for Customs Payments

Seeking to determine the status of its forthcoming coins to be made under government authorization, Moffat & Co. applied to the collector of customs, the results of which were noted on the editorial pages of the *Daily Alta California* on January 30, 1851:

> Some persons having expressed doubt whether the stamped ingots or coins to be issued by Moffat & Co. under the late Act of Congress, under the supervision of the United States Assayer, will be received in payment of Government dues. [Joseph R.] Curtis of the above firm has addressed Mr. T. Butler King, Collector of the Port, upon the subject, to which he has replied,
>
> "I am authorized to receive those bars and ingots at the Custom House."
>
> We can further state that the most eminent lawyers in the United States, and also men in the most eminent positions, have given it as their unqualified opinion that after due deliberation and investigation of the question, that these ingots and bars will be a legal tender; that they are coins of the United States government as is the dollar and the eagle, being, like them, issued by Act of Congress, and bearing the stamp of the government.

The New Octagonal $50 Coins

The *Pacific News*, February 1, 1851, noted that "the dies for this purpose—the striking of the $50 pieces—have been procured, and the first coin produced by them was shown us yesterday."

On February 14, 1851, *San Francisco Prices Current* contained an article relating to the $50 "slugs," soon called "adobes" as well, indicating their regular production was about to begin:

> The above cut represents the obverse of the United States ingot, or, rather, coin, of the value of $50, about to be issued at the Government Assay Office. It is precisely of this size and shape.... The reverse side bears an impression of rayed work without any inscription. Upon the edges, the following: "Augustus Humbert United States Assayer—California Gold 1851."
>
> Those of five hundred and one thousand dollars are in form parallelograms, about five inches in length, and one and three-quarter inches in breadth, and ranging in thickness—the smaller ones being about three-tenths of an inch and larger six-tenths.[1]
>
> The fifty-dollar pieces will be of uniform value and will be manufactured in the same manner as coins.... By order of the secretary of the Treasury these ingots and coin are to be received for duties and other dues to the United States government, and our bankers, we are advised, will receive them at their stamped value. This will produce an important change in the monetary affairs here, gold dust will immediately go up, and as a necessary consequence foreign and domestic [eastern] exchange will be at a premium 5 to 7%....

Production Commences: 300 Struck

The *Alta California* commented on the new $50 pieces on February 21, 1851:

> The new 50-dollar gold piece...was issued by Moffat & Co. yesterday. About three hundred of these pieces have already been struck off.... The coin is peculiar, containing only one face, and the eagle in the center, around which are the words "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA." Just over the eagle is stamped "887 THOUS." signifying the fineness of the gold. At the bottom is stamped "50 DOLLS."
>
> The other face is ornamented with a kind of work technically called engine-turning, being a number of radii extending from the common centre, in which is stamped, in small figures, "50." Around the edge is stamped the name of the United States Assayer....[2]

Edgar H. Adams noted that it was supposed that the variety with the letters "D C" on the obverse and "50" on the reverse was the first issue. The account in the *Alta California* would seem to indicate another variety. Commenting on this, Adams wrote:

> So far as is known, the variety with the "50" in the center of the reverse has always been accompanied by an obverse showing the letters "D C," [for "Dollars" and "Cents," value to be filled in] which is still believed to be the first variety issued. But according to the *Alta California* the $50 ingots described by it were stamped "50 DOLLS," which style of obverse, so far as we know, always accompanies the reverse with the "50" omitted.
>
> If our recollection is correct, the cut in the *Prices Current* [a reference to the previously-quoted article], showed the "D C" variety. Therefore, as this appeared on February 14, and the *Alta California* account on February 21, it may be that both varieties of obverse were struck within this period, and that there was such a variety as mentioned in the latter account. However, there is also a chance for a mistake on the part of the newspaper writer, especially if both varieties of $50 ingots had been made at that time. Such a trifling die difference would not be apparent to him.

Minting an 1851 $50

The large and impressive *lettered edge* $50 coins made in February 1851 were created by a very complicated process involving the following separate steps once the planchet was produced:

Step 1. The obverse and reverse motifs were stamped from a pair of dies. These dies had been

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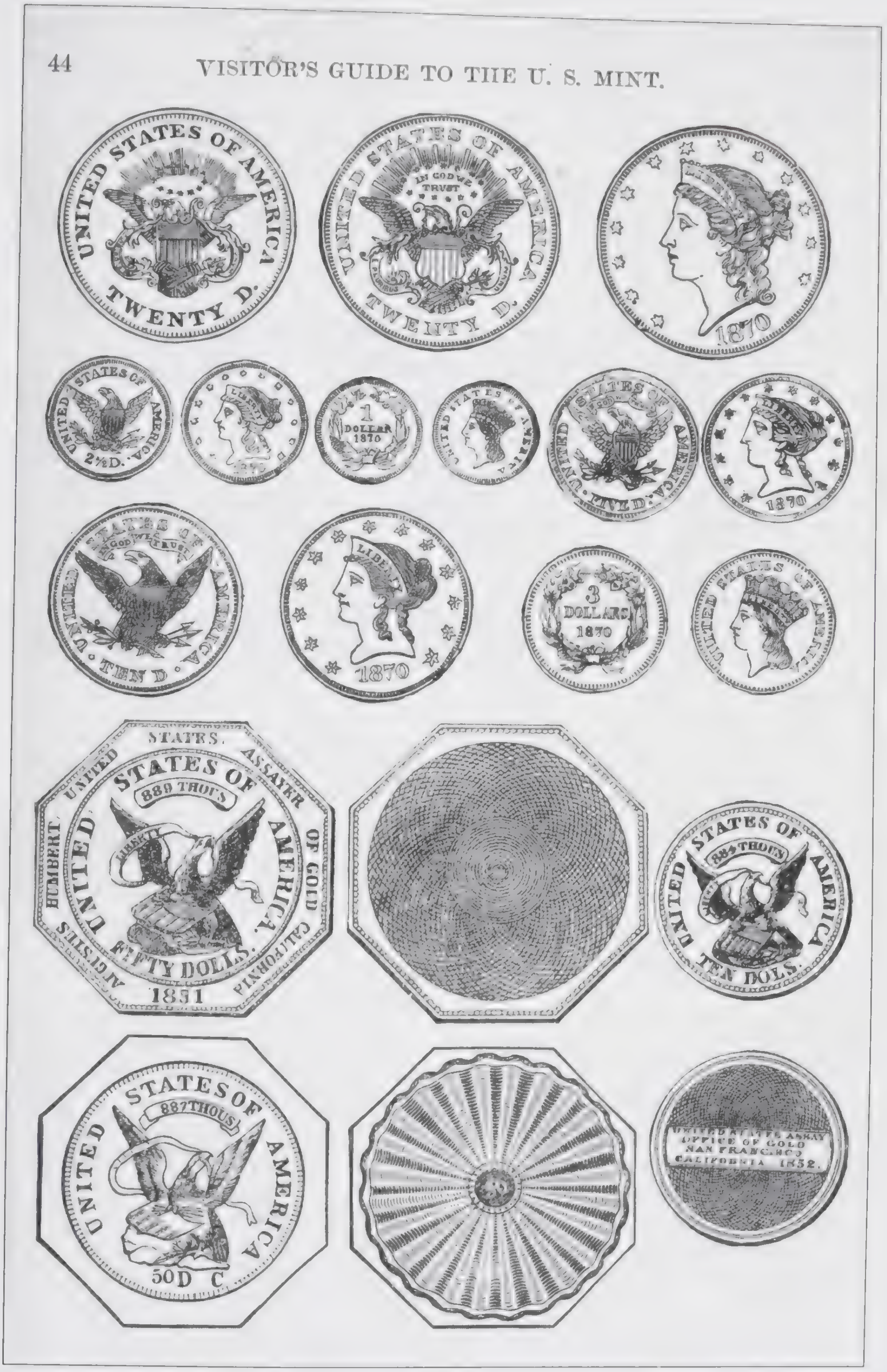
[1] None of these "parallelograms," or Humbert gold bars, are known to exist today, although there is every reason to believe that they were once produced, perhaps in quantity.

[2] *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine and Commercial Register,* (Vol. 24, January to June, 1851, pp. 743-745) reprinted much of this account from the *Alta California*, and added its own comment: "We have seen an impression in wax of the new fifty dollar gold pieces, manufactured under the act of Congress, appointing a United States Assay Office in California. The impression was from a coin issued by Moffat & Co., of San Francisco, in March, 1851."



44 VISITOR'S GUIDE TO THE U. S. MINT.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
TWENTY D.
IN GOD WE TRUST
1870
2½ D.
1 DOLLAR 1870
FIVE D.
TEN D.
LIBERTY
3 DOLLARS 1870
UNITED STATES ASSAYER OF GOLD CALIFORNIA
AUGUSTUS HUMBERT
889 THOUS
FIFTY DOLLS.
1851
884 THOUS
TEN DOLS.
887 THOUS
50 D C
UNITED STATES ASSAY OFFICE OF GOLD SAN FRANCISCO CALIFORNIA 1852.

A page of engravings from the *Visitors Guide and History of the U.S. Mint, Philadelphia*, A.M. Smith, 1885, shows $50 gold slugs. The variety at the bottom left (obverse) and center is the hand-made, lettered-edge style.

made in New York City by Humbert and brought with him to California. The obverse features an eagle holding a shield, perched on a rock, with a thin ribbon inscribed LIBERTY in its beak. Above is a blank ribbon suitable for inscription. The dies of this style were the work of Charles Cushing Wright.[1] Inscriptions on these patterns as well as the first octagonal ingots produced for circulation have simply the letters D C DWT. GRS. It was intended that the value in dollars and cents and the weight in pennyweights and grains could simply be stamped in the place provided. In this way ingots of $50, $100, $200, or any other desired denomination could be produced, differing from each other only by size, weight, and fineness, but incorporating the same stamp. • The reverse is of a geometric "engine turned" design similar to that used on a watch case, and reflects Augustus Humbert's skill as a maker of such cases—one of the occupations he had followed in New York City.

Steps 2-4. The fineness was hand-stamped on the obverse with three separate numeral punches. Finenesses known to have been thus applied include 880 (usually seen) and 887.

Step 5. The value (50) was hand-stamped on the obverse, from a single punch. This punch was also used to stamp 50 on the reverse of some issues.

Steps 6-13. In eight separate operations each of the eight edge faces was stamped with a logotype punch, the eight punches reading incuse: AUGUSTUS / HUMBERT / UNITED / STATES / ASSAYER / OF GOLD / CALIFORNIA / 1851. There was no particular standard starting or stopping place for the inscriptions, and the position of a given part of the inscription varies with relation to its position to design elements. Most have inverted inscriptions in relation to the obverse. • If there was a favorite starting and stopping place it was with 1851 in the 6 o'clock position (as viewed from the obverse), AUGUSTUS to the left in the 7:30 position, etc., continuing the inscription clockwise. More pieces have been seen with this arrangement than with any other—but, as noted, there seems to have been no rule in this regard.

Thus, it took at least 13 steps to create one of the early $50 pieces.

Step 14. The value (50) was hand-stamped on the reverse, from a single punch. *Some* of the early issues had the denomination 50 stamped at the center of the reverse, a 14th step. The same punch was used as for Step 5 above.

Not long thereafter, the process was simplified, the inscriptions relating to Humbert were placed on the obverse die, and a reeded edge collar was used, permitting coins to be struck in one operation. As to how many of the 1851 lettered edge "slugs" were made, no one knows. My estimate is several tens of thousands, of which several hundred survive today.

Varieties are of two main obverse styles: with the fineness expressed as 880 and as 887, with some having "50" stamped at the center of the reverse, while others lack this feature.

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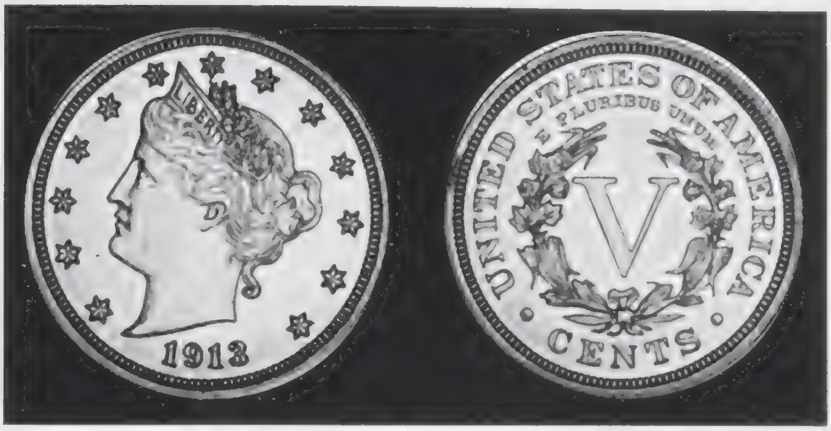
[1] One pattern impression in copper is signed on the edge by Wright as "Wright fec," for "Wright fecit" (Latin for "Wright made it"). • In correspondence with the author, Dr. Harry E. Salyards suggested that the assignment of this commission to Wright may have been "a concession after Franklin Peale's 1849 'promise' of the office of chief engraver to Wright went awry."

ADVENTURE NO. 37

THE 1913 LIBERTY HEAD NICKEL



The finest known specimen of only five 1913 Liberty Head nickels believed to have been struck. Due to a publicity campaign mounted by Texas dealer B. Max Mehl, this was the most talked about coin among the American public during the 1930s. (Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr. Collection, 1996, Lot 807)

* * *

"The" Nickel!

In American numismatics, the 1913 Liberty Head nickel is a landmark, and much has been written about it. It is believed that just five were struck, of which number I have been involved with three. One was the specimen from the King Farouk Collection, purchased by Ambassador and Mrs. R. Henry Norweb, and gifted by them to the National Numismatic Collection at the Smithsonian Institution, for which I did the appraisal and assisted in other ways. The second was a specimen that appeared in the Edwin Hydeman Collection offered by Abe Kosoff, but which did not find a buyer at the reserve price, and which was later sold by Kosoff to WorldWide Coin Investments of Atlanta, from whom I acquired it in the mid-1970s. The third was the finest known, condition-wise, the gem Proof in the Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr. Collection auctioned by Bowers and Merena Galleries in 1996.

I've written about this coin on a number of occasions, including in my 1979 book, *Adventures with Rare Coins*, and in essays when I've offered such coins for sale, most recently in the Eliasberg catalogue and the biography, *Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr., King of Coins.* Thus, here my mention will be somewhat brief (sort of).

Story of the 1913 Nickel

Very early in the 1913 year, before the Indian/Buffalo ("Buffalo" nickel) design was adopted in February, it is believed that just five 1913-dated nickel five-cent pieces were struck at the Philadelphia Mint employing the still current Liberty Head design that had been in use since 1883. This was probably done in the Medal Department, where Proofs and special strikings were made, including numerous limited-edition pieces that were not openly sold to collectors (the MCMVII Extremely High Relief Proof $20, of which about 22 pieces were made, being another example from the same era). Samuel W. Brown, a knowledgeable numismatist who attended the American Numismatic Association Convention when it was held in Philadelphia in 1908, was an employee of the Mint at the time, worked in the coining department and also with the Mint Collection, and is generally considered the person who received the five pieces. They were in his possession by 1920 and openly shown at the American Numismatic Association convention and advertised in *The Numismatist.* However, the fame of "the nickel" was yet to come.

Of all American coin rarities, the 1913 Liberty Head nickel is probably the most famous. Decades ago Texas dealer B. Max Mehl spent millions of dollars advertising in magazines and newspapers and on the radio selling copies of his *Star Rare Coin Encyclopedia* which listed prices he paid for coins. The idea was that if you were lucky enough to find a 1913 Liberty Head nickel in change, you could pay off the mortgage on the ranch or send Junior to college. The 1913 nickel captured the public's fancy and became the focal point of his advertising campaign which extended over a period of many years. Along the way, the 1913 Liberty Head nickel gained incredible fame. It is said that traffic was slowed in big cities as streetcar conductors examined incoming nickels from passengers, seeking a prized 1913! It was front row center in the mind of just about everyone.

Just as an otherwise uninformed citizen on Main Street, U.S.A. would know that the Mona Lisa is a treasure in the art world, likely as not he or she would know of one great American coin rarity, and that was the 1913 Liberty Head nickel.

More than any other single individual, Mehl (1884-1957), who began his rare coin dealership in 1903, popularized the hobby of numismatics. Not only did his *Star Rare Coin Encyclopedia* bring many newcomers into the hobby, but he was very active in established numismatic circles as well. During his career he had the lion's share of large collections offered at auction (actually, he conducted what today would be called mail bid sales as there was no in-person participation at an auction site). The Ten Eyck, Slack, Dunham, Atwater, Geiss, Royal, and other catalogue names are often quoted today, and note is made as well of properties he handled privately, such as the Waldo C. Newcomer collection of U.S. coins and the Dr. George P. French cabinet of large cents.

Despite his search for a 1913 Liberty Head nickel, B. Max Mehl was not able to buy one. Playboy millionaire Col. E.H.R. Green acquired all five known specimens in the mid-1920s, and held on to them for the rest of his life. Similarly, Green acquired the entire sheet of 100 1918 24¢ stamps with inverted "Jenny" biplane—representing the entire population of that famous stamp. Green's other "collections" included trains and ships—not toys, but the real things.

After Green's death in 1936, his coins and other items came on to the market slowly. In the early 1940s, Eric P. Newman, a St. Louis numismatist, bought some paper money from the numismatic estate of Green that was being sold by Burdette G. Johnson, well-known dealer of the same city. Upon asking if any coins were available, Newman was shown an inventory by Johnson. Listed were all five of the 1913 Liberty Head nickels.

Eric P. Newman in partnership with Johnson bought all five of the rare nickels, and later sold four of them, keeping the finest, one of only two with Proof surface, for his own cabinet, the coin that was later acquired by Louis Eliasberg.

Genesis of the 1913 Liberty Head Nickel

In early January 1913 it was perfectly legal to make a 1913 Liberty Head nickel at the Mint. As Lee F. Hewitt, founder of the *Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine,* a no-nonsense observer of the numismatic scene, said a number of times, under practices then in effect at the Mint, all one had to do was to exchange another date of five-cent piece for a 1913 Liberty Head. Although none had been made in quantity for circulation, in early 1913 the Liberty Head motif was the standard design in use, the "Buffalo" nickel not yet having been either perfected as to design or issued for circulation. The first "experimental" Indian-Buffalo nickels were struck on January 7, 1913, but production for circulation did not take place until after February 15, as there were problems with the design. For someone in the Medal Department of the Mint to have struck a few 1913 Liberty Head nickels for cabinet purposes early in January 1913 would have been neither unusual nor illegal. The Liberty Head motif was the official design until it was replaced with the Indian-Buffalo motif, and this did not happen until well into February 1913.

Had not the design problems with the Indian-Buffalo design been straightened out, Liberty Head nickels might have been made in large quantities for circulation in 1913. As it was, the Mint had been told to do nothing with the nickel denomination until the new Indian-Buffalo design was perfected.

Alternatively, the 1913 Liberty Head nickels could have been struck as test pieces in autumn 1912 when dies for the next year's coinage were being made, and before it was decided not to use the design.

Or, they could have been made as numismatic delicacies by or for Samuel W. Brown, the aforementioned Mint employee. It should be noted that Brown was well regarded in his time, was elected to the post of mayor of North Tonawanda, New York, and was invited to serve on the Assay Commission at the Philadelphia Mint in 1924 and 1925. No evidence has come to light that Brown was viewed with disfavor by his contemporaries or did anything of a disreputable nature at the Mint, and he seems to have been an active participant in the numismatic community.

Whatever the circumstances of striking—which will probably forever remain unknown—the 1913 Liberty Head nickel remains today the most publicized of all American coins. Among more recent coverage were news articles in 2001 relating to Dwight Manley's purchase of the Eliasberg Collection specimen and its subsequent display in a special "house" made for it, at the Long Beach Coin and Collectibles Expo. And the following....

Eric P. Newman's Reminiscences

The Nickel was front row center in this article by Beth Deisher, *Coin World*, June 11, 2001:[1]

> **How'd you like to sell a 1913 5¢ for $2,000?**
>
> **Eric Newman, last to own all five coins, "I never look backwards."**
>
> How would you feel if a coin you once owned and sold for $2,000 now commands nearly $2 million?
>
> The unflappable Eric P. Newman responds, "I never look backwards." Plus, he points out, value has never been the overriding factor in his interest in a particular coin. The coin's historical importance is his forte.
>
> To a certain extent Newman, now 90 years of age, discounts that he is inextricably a part of the legendary coin's history.
>
> For seven years (1941 to 1948) he owned what is known today as the Eliasberg specimen of the 1913 Liberty Head five-cent coin, which set a record March 9 when Dwight Manley purchased it at auction for $1.84 million.
>
> Newman acquired the coin—the finest known 1913 Liberty Head five-cent coin—in 1941 when he purchased Col. Edward H.R. Green's "Nickel Collection" from the executor of Green's estate.
>
> Correspondence Newman made available May 16 to *Coin World* reveals that he, in fact, purchased all five of the 1913 Liberty Head nickels from the Green Estate in December 1941 in two separate transactions. For $2,000 he purchased approximately 600 five-cent coins that included "all regular issues, patterns, misstrikes and mutilations except three of the five 1913 Liberty Head nickels."
>
> Newman instructed in his Dec. 13, 1941, letter: "When you remove from the little black case the two 1913 Liberty Head Nickels for me (as well as the three Buffalo nickels in that case) I want two bright perfect specimens of the 1913 Liberty Head Nickels. With respect to the three excluded 1913 Liberty Head Nickels, I will buy them if you will agree to accept One Thousand Dollars ($1,000.00) for them."
>
> Newman explains that after traveling by train to New York City to examine thousands of coins in the Green Collection, he had returned to St. Louis and discussed what he had seen with his friend and mentor, Burdette "B.G." Johnson, owner of the St. Louis Stamp & Coin Co.
>
> Aware the coins' origin was a matter of conjecture, Newman recalls he and Johnson thought at one time the coins could be "fakes." He also noted the five 1913 Liberty Head five-cent coins appeared to have been struck on different qualities of planchets, possibly whatever was available to the person who struck them, and that they were of different conditions.
>
> "We thought the two best ones were worth about $500 each," Newman recalls. "We didn't feel the other three had that much value," he said, explaining the reason for separating them from his original offer and making a second offer.
>
> Newman's offers and certified checks were accepted by the Green executors, and by letter dated Dec. 29, 1941, he was informed that the remaining three 1913 coins had been shipped to him.
>
> The "little black case" contained slots for eight five-cent coins. With the arrival of the three 1913 Liberty Head specimens, the eight coins were briefly reunited. They included the five 1913 Liberty Head five-cent coins, a unique copper 1913 Indian Head five-cent pattern, a 1913 Indian Head five-cent circulation strike and a copper-nickel pattern 1913 Indian Head five-cent coin without initial F on the shoulder.
>
> Newman stills owns the black leather case, the 1913 Indian Head regular issue, and what he believes to be "the rarest of the bunch," the copper Indian Head pattern.
>
> Researcher Don Taxay, writing in *The U.S. Mint and Coinage*, noted: "The unique copper trial piece of type 2 design (*i.e.*, with modified FIVE CENTS) is neither a trial piece nor made of copper. It was struck from an experimental alloy of ninety-five percent copper, five percent nickel and zinc and 'issued' in the original presentation case which held the five 1913 Liberty head nickels."
>
> "Whatever it is, it's still unique and it's sitting there in the case," Newman said with a laugh.
>
> Newman is believed to be the only person alive today who has seen all five of the legendary coins together.
>
> Shortly after acquiring the five, he decided to keep the finest specimen for his collection and sell the rest. With the help of Johnson and Ohio dealer Jim Kelly, the other four were placed in collections.
>
> Today, two of the 1913 Liberty Head nickels are in museum collections: the American Numismatic Association and the National Numismatic Collection of the

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Smithsonian Institution. One's whereabouts is unknown and two are in private collections. Both in private collections have established record prices when sold.

Although their existence has been known for 82 years, the origin of the five coins remains a mystery. No one knows precisely when or who made the five 1913 Liberty Head five-cent coins. There are no U.S. Mint records that mention them.

The first hint that they may exist came in 1919 when Samuel W. Brown placed an advertisement in *The Numismatist,* a monthly journal published by the ANA. Brown offered to pay $500 — a princely sum — per coin for any Liberty Head nickels dated 1913.

The ad should have raised an eyebrow or two in collecting circles, but it didn't. The U.S. Mint had begun producing a new nickel, the Indian Head/Buffalo design, in early 1913 and stopped making the Liberty Head design in 1912.

Brown had become an employee of the U.S. Mint on Dec. 18, 1903, and served as assistant curator of the U.S. Mint's coin cabinet from 1904 to 1907. He left the Mint in November of 1913.

Collectors' first glimpse of a 1913 Liberty Head five-cent coin came when Brown exhibited one at the 1920 ANA convention. In 1924 Philadelphia dealer August Wagner offered to sell the "complete set of five." It is unclear whether Wagner owned the coins or was acting as an agent for Brown. They are believed to have been purchased in 1924 by the millionaire collector Col. Edward H.R. Green.

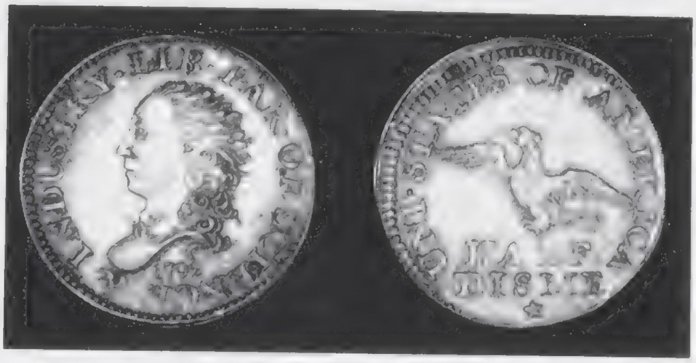
Green died in 1936. In 1941 Newman purchased all five nickels from the Green Estate and sold four of the coins through St. Louis dealer Burdette Johnson. Newman kept the finest known specimen until 1948, when he sold it to dealer Abe Kosoff, who sold it to Baltimore banker and collector Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr.

Newman never looked back. He used the money he obtained from selling the Liberty Head 5-cent coins to purchase other "more historic and important coins" for his collection.

ADVENTURE NO. 38

PRESIDENT WASHINGTON & THE 1792 HALF DISME

Washington's "Small beginning"



The 1792 silver half disme is the first circulating coinage associated with the Philadelphia Mint, although as the Mint was not ready to produce coins in autumn 1792, it is believed these were made at a nearby location. (Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr. Collection, 1996, Lot 883)

Regular Issue or Pattern?

The historical 1792 silver half disme is considered by some to be a pattern and by others a regular issue. I side with the regular issue faction, perhaps following tradition in this regard, as pioneer half dime scholar Harold P. Newlin eloquently suggested in 1883 (see below). Moreover, James Ross Snowden in 1860, drawing upon much Mint history, felt likewise.

Although collectors pronounce *disme* to rhyme with "Disney," it is likely that it was intended to be pronounced as *deem*, from the French. Later, the "S" was dropped, and the term *dime* (or, in this instance, half dime) became popular.

The original mintage is not known. Different accounts place the mintage between 1,000 and 1,500 coins, and some of these same accounts suggest that the silver was provided personally by President George Washington, who also supervised the striking. This nice legend furnished the motif for a painting that has been widely reproduced.

For generations the ownership of a 1792 half disme has been a badge of distinction for advanced numismatists. The vast majority of the two or three hundred surviving pieces are well worn, with perhaps a dozen or two in choice Mint State.

Harold P. Newlin

Harold P. Newlin, a Philadelphia attorney, kept his finger on the pulse of the coin hobby in the early 1880s. Ever interested in what was going on with collectors and dealers, and which coins were being bought and sold and by whom, he enjoyed keeping Baltimore collector T. Harrison Garrett up to date on such matters. For Garrett, scion of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad family, Newlin was a valuable source of information. He even knew what W. Elliot Woodward was doing in distant Roxbury, Massachusetts.[1]

The year 1883 was pivotal for Newlin and saw the publication of his monograph, *A Classification of the*

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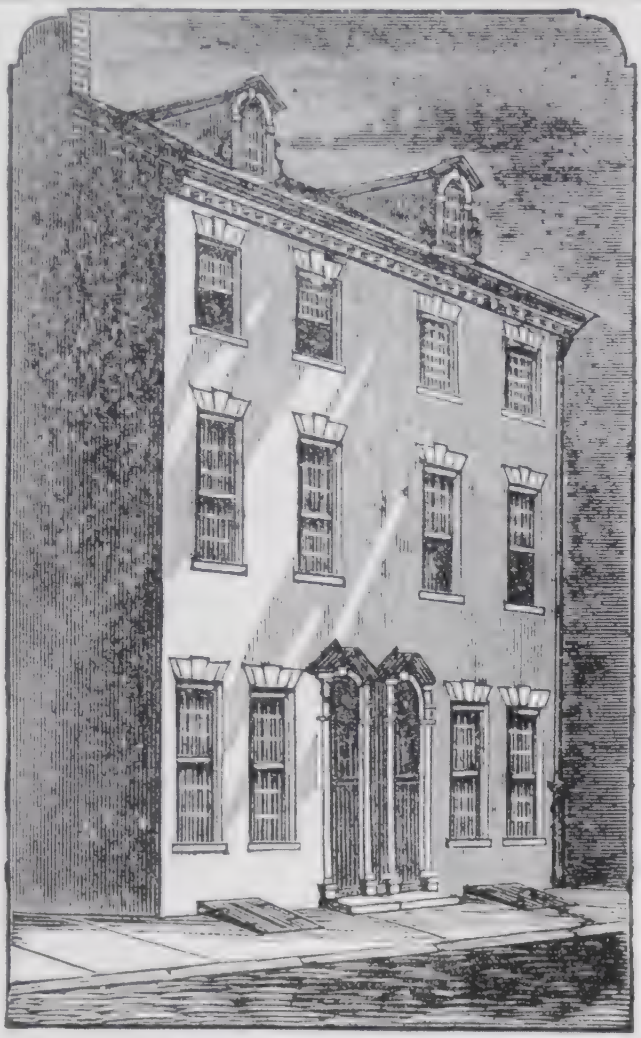
[1] Correspondence between Newlin and T. Harrison Garrett, and other information about Newlin, may be found in Q. David Bowers' book, *The History of United States Coinage as Illustrated by the Garrett Collection*, 1979.



Front of the first Philadelphia Mint, erected in 1792 and used through 1832. It is said that in 1792 the premises were not quite ready for producing coins, and that the silver half disme of this year was struck at a private facility nearby. (*Illustrated History of the United States Mint*, published by George G. Evans, 1892)

Early Half-Dimes of the United States with a Few Remarks on Their Types, Varieties, Rarity, Etc., Etc., published in Philadelphia by dealer J.W. Haseltine. Around the same time—for sales held on March 1-2 and again on April 10—Haseltine prepared catalogues featuring coins consigned by Newlin.

In his *Classification of the Early Half-Dimes* Newlin listed the different varieties 1792-1805, focusing upon just two for special attention—the 1792 half disme and the very rare 1802. For the 1792 he stated this:

> It is, I believe, generally conceded by numismatists, that the first regular coinage of the United States Mint was in 1793—consisting of the copper cent and half cent. This belief would seem to exclude the 1792 half dime, known as the Martha Washington half disme, from the regular series, and for the reason that it is considered a pattern piece, not intended for general circulation and struck before the regular series commenced. Without desiring to place myself in direct opposition to this accepted opinion, I would simply say that having studied the history of the half dime with some degree of care, I can find in it nothing to indicate that it was intended simply for a trial piece.
>
> Washington, in his annual address, November 6, 1792, having said, *inter alia*, "There has been a small beginning in the coinage of half dimes, the want of small coins in circulation calling the first attention to them," and it would certainly seem reasonable to accept the words of this gentleman, whose general reputation for veracity is, I believe, conceded to be good, and consider the 1792 half dime the 'small beginning' in the said series. Mr. Snowden, in his book [*Description of the Coins in the Cabinet of the United States Mint*] expresses his opinion thus: "We consider that the piece was intended for general circulation."

John Harper

It is believed that the 1792 half dimes were struck outside of the Mint, the federal facilities not yet being ready.

In *The Numismatist*, May 1943, a letter from Edward B. Haden was published, which revealed that several weeks earlier he had stopped to visit Leary's Book Store in Philadelphia and had found a notation on a piece of paper glued to the flyleaf of an old numismatic tome. The notation, penned on April 9, 1844, and signed by [John McAllister][1] referred to the 1792 half disme and related:

> In conversation with Mr. Adam Eckfeldt today at the Mint, he informed me that the half dismes above described were struck at the request of Gen. Washington to the extent of $100, which sum he deposited in bullion or specie—for that purpose—Mr. Eckfeldt thinks that Gen. Washington distributed them as presents—some were sent to Europe but the greater number of them he believes were given to acquaintances in Virginia.
>
> No more of them were coined except those for Gen. Washington. They were never designed as currency—the Mint was not at the time fully ready for going into operation. The coining machinery was in the cellar of Mr. Harper's sawmaker at the corner of Cherry and Sixth streets, at which place these pieces were struck.

Another early mention of this appeared in the September 1861 issue of *The Historical Magazine:*

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[1] *The Numismatist*, July 1943; correction to the Haden article by Charles McSorley; changed the name to Jonas R. McClintock; the original Haden article had said "I. McAllister." However, in *The Numismatist*, June 1996, Carl Herkowitz showed that the actual writer was John McAllister.

> John Harper, an extensive manufacturer of saws, at the corner of Sixth and Cherry streets, caused dies to be made under the direction of Robert Birch. The coins of 1791 [apparently a reference to what we now consider to be the Washington Large Eagle and Small Eagle cents made in England] were made in the cellar of Mr. Harper's shop on a press which it is supposed was imported from England.
>
> The coins of 1792 were struck on a press which was set up in an old coach-house in Sixth Street above Chestnut, directly opposite Jayne Street. This last described press was made by Adam Eckfeldt.

Much more about Harper is related in early numismatic publications, including by Montroville W. Dickeson (*An American Numismatical Manual*, 1859), *The Historical Magazine*, and Sylvester S. Crosby (*Early Coins of America*, 1875). After the 1950s, modern scholar Walter Breen embellished a lot of early theories and comments and presented them as facts, which *some* may have been, while others were suppositions. Thus, from Breen we have this factual-sounding statement concerning another enigmatic coin variety from the 1790s, the so-called Jefferson Head cent dated 1795:[1]

> John Harper's "Jefferson Heads" [were] made on his own press no later than March 1795 as part of his presentation to Elias Boudinot's Congressional Committee investigating the Mint.

In actuality, it is not known who made the Jefferson Head cents, or where they were struck.

The 1802 half dime from the Eliasberg Collection sold in 1996. Of all American silver rarities, this is the only one for which no choice Mint State or Proof examples are known. *All* show signs of wear, usually extensive.

Newlin's Favorite Rarity

In connection with Newlin's aforementioned 1883 monograph, I quote some of his introductory remarks regarding his favorite American silver rarity and the reasons he gave for its advocacy:

> ### The Half Dime of 1802
>
> I have endeavored in the following article, to give a list of the number of the half-dimes of this date known to collectors, and also a brief history, if I may so term it, of each individual piece, describing its condition, price realized when sold at public or private sales, and as far as I am able, the names of the purchasers.
>
> I write thus in detail, because I think it may be interesting to collectors to learn all they can about this—the most desirable piece of the American silver series.
>
> I foresee that some numismatists will take issue with me in the statement, that the 1802 half dime is the most desirable of the silver series. My reason for giving it the most exalted place, I will endeavor to explain.
>
> If a collector were asked to name the four rarest American silver coins, he would, I am sure, naming them in the order of their denominations, say: the 1804 dollar, 1823 quarter, 1827 quarter, and 1802 half dime. I will assume that these are the rarest.[2]
>
> The 1804 dollar has been re-struck. The dies were not destroyed till the year 1860, and I believe the pieces were re-struck from the dies, upon two occasions, a short time prior to this year....[3]
>
> The 1827 quarter has also been restruck. The 1823 quarter is struck from the altered die of the quarter of the preceding year, and possesses no characteristics of its own. The 1802 half dime is open to none of these objections. It has never been restruck. The dies were made for that year and were destroyed. I have seen many dangerous counterfeits of the 1804 dollar and of the 1823 quarter, but have never seen one of the 1802 half dime.
>
> Upon these facts I base my opinion, that the half-dime of 1802 is the most desirable of the silver series.
>
> There are, I believe—and I make this assertion, having given the subject a good deal of study and research—but 16 specimens of the half dime of this year, known to be in the possession of dealers or collectors. That a larger number were coined I do not doubt, but what that number is, will never become known, as the Mint authorities declare there is no way of ascertaining it. In 1863, but three specimens had been discovered—the number is now more than quintupled, and it may be that it will be further increased, but very gradually, I am sure, and not at all in proportion to the increasing demand.

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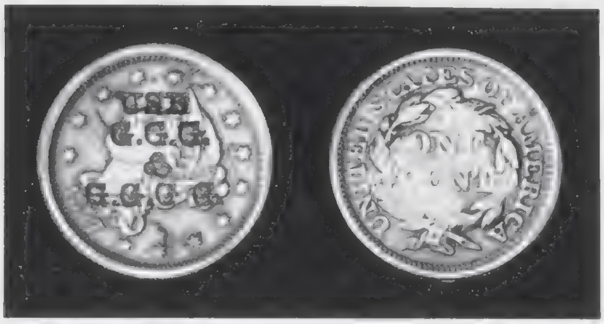
[1] Walter H. Breen, "Philadelphia's Original Flying Disks." *American Numismatic Association Centennial Anthology*, 1991.

[2] In 1883 mintmark varieties were not collected; this largely awaited publication of Augustus G. Heaton's *Treatise on Mint Marks*, 1893.

[3] The reference is to the Class III or "restrike" 1804.

ADVENTURE NO. 39

LITTLE BILLBOARDS OF A BYGONE ERA



Large copper cent counterstamped USE / G.G.G. / & / G.G.G.G. The meaning of these cabalistic initials G.G.G. was revealed by W. Elliot Woodward as early as 1862, but not until 2001 did a numismatist decipher G.G.G.G.

These along with other counterstamps have stimulated my interest in this rather obscure numismatic byway.

The Charm of Counterstamps

"I can't afford to collect coins. They are too expensive." I have heard this comment often, especially when a rare 1793 large copper cent, 1879 $4 gold "stella," or other rare coin makes the news.[1]

This feeling is unwarranted, as any experienced numismatist can tell you. Some of the most interesting coins are very inexpensive to own. In fact, quite a few of the "adventure items" in this book are not costly at all. Even a school kid can afford a 1909 V.D.B. cent or an 1883 without CENTS Liberty Head nickel. This "adventure" is about items that for the most part are inexpensive, and years ago were sometimes free!

As you know by reading this far in the book, I believe that if a coin is worth 1 "point" in interest and desirability, and if an interesting story is also worth 1 "point," if you put 1 and 1 together, in numismatics, in defiance of mathematical principles 1 + 1 can equal 3 or 4, not just 2!

From a *business viewpoint* counterstamps may be a grand waste of time. I have been a rare coin dealer, and thus in the business, for most of my life, but, probably contrary to good corporate principles, have spent (wasted?) hundreds (thousands?) of hours tracking down obscure information on the likes of Dr. Shattuck, druggist Goodwin, entrepreneur Wilkins, and others. However, I have cashed in lots of markers in terms of enjoyment and satisfaction. And, if I had it to do over again, nothing would be different.

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[1] Someday I would like to write a large and wide-ranging book on counterstamped large cents. In fact, this book-to-be has been longer in the making than anything I have ever written, for in 1955, when the idea of collecting counterstamped large cents was a fresh subject in my eyes, I first dreamed of writing about the stories behind the coins. In a way, part of this book has been written, in the form of two studies, the monograph, *The Strange Career of Dr. Wilkins: A Numismatic Study* (1987) and the book-length effort, *The Waterford Water Cure: A Numismatic Inquiry* (1992). For the Coinage of the Americas Conference (American Numismatic Society, New York, 1994), I presented "Two Coins in One: Large Cents with Interesting Counterstamps," which was later published with the COAC Proceedings. In addition, I have written numerous articles on the subject for *The Numismatist*, *Penny-Wise*, *Coin World*, and other forums in print. Certain information in this section is from these articles. In 1985, Dr. Gregory G. Brunk arranged to spend a week in our conference room, examining a couple thousand large cents and taking detailed notes on them while selecting pieces for photography. Released in 1987, Dr. Brunk's *American and Canadian Countermarked Coins* was a welcome addition to the hobby and served to condense between two covers nearly all of what was known on the subject.

Similarly, certain of my correspondents in this arcane avenue of exploration and interest—Dr. Gregory Brunk, Russ Rulau, Steve Tanenbaum, and Bill Swoger come to mind as I write these particular words—seem to enjoy the pursuit as much as I do.

In their day the copper "large" cents were the most ubiquitous of United States coins and were seen in circulation just about everywhere in the East and, to a lesser extent, in the Midwest. At an early time these handy coppers were seized upon as free little billboards for advertising. When stamped with an inscription, a cent would relay its message as it passed from hand to hand.

Collecting Them

In 1955, I acquired a set of monthly issues of *The Numismatist* from 1904 to date (later filled in back to 1894, and still later, with *reprints* of 1888-1893 as originals were too expensive). As time out from my high school studies and coin dealing activities permitted, I skimmed each issue, pausing to read articles of interest.

Part way through the issues of the year 1947 I encountered in the July number an article, "Counterstamped or Countermarked U.S. Large Cents,"[1] bearing Maurice M. Gould's byline. I read the article word by word, then read it again. By the time I encountered Gould's article I had a passing acquaintance with the subject of counterstamps in general, mostly knowledge I had gained from reading Frank G. Duffield's serial article on counterstamps which began in *The Numismatist* in 1919 and continued until 1921. Duffield was editor of the magazine at the time, and it seems that he could do about what he pleased. Later, a long span of years was devoted with D.C. Wismer's seemingly endless serial on bank notes issued in different states and towns. Today, *The Numismatist*—and other publications, too—try for what *USA Today* has called factoids, or what on radio and television are known as "sound bytes." Essentially, such policies assume that modern readers have neither the patience nor the inclination to stay with a given subject long enough to explore its intricacies. No doubt Louis Agassiz, Benjamin Silliman, or even Lewis Feuchtwanger, if they were alive today, would be appalled at such superficiality.

A scene such as this evokes thoughts of large copper cents and the era in which they were used, 1793-1857. Likely the people shown had a few such coins in their pockets. ("View of New London, Connecticut, from the Shore Road" *Gleason's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion*, November 4, 1854)

Returning to the "Countermarked" article published in 1947 in *The Numismatist*, author Maury Gould, who with Frank Washburn operated the Copley Coin Company in Boston, was a fine fellow. A number of years ago he sent me a letter I had typed to him in 1952, ordering a coin he had advertised in the *Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine*. Later, Maury and his wife Jean moved to California, where for a time he was a columnist for *Coin World*, among other activities. Once a *serious* numismatist, always a numismatist, it has been said, and Gould took his interest with him to the grave.

After reading Gould's 1947 article I contacted him and, sure enough, he had on hand some of the pieces similar to those he had described in *The Numismatist* in 1947. A few dozen different were sent to me on approval, at about a dollar each.

Reading, Thinking, Figuring Things Out

After reading Duffield's study and Gould's article I paused to think. Why would someone counterstamp a cent, and how would they do it? In the "how would they do it?" category I realized that a long-ago counterstamper would have had to have possessed a punch or die to do the work. As making a punch or die with a name on it isn't something to be done casually just to mark a large cent or two, there must have been *another purpose* for creating same. What type of activities during the early nineteenth century—during the large copper cent era—required the use of a metal punch in the ordinary course of business?

Silversmiths! I recognized that certain punches of the hallmark type (with raised letters) that I had seen on large cents were similar in concept to the punches used by silversmiths and jewelers to mark the undersides of spoons, dishes, and other metal ware. I contacted Maury Gould and mentioned this connection to him, and he suggested that I investigate further. Apparently, no one had ever thought to investigate this area.

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[1] *The Numismatist*, Vol. 60, pp. 494-497.

I sought and found several guides to silversmiths' marks, and was rewarded by identifying a dozen or more on large cents! As simple as this may seem now, to a generation of numismatists schooled in the history of counterstamps, tokens, and other merchants' pieces, in the 1950s it was a revelation. In a follow-up article in *The Numismatist,* July 1957, Gould, noting that I was a "well-known dealer" (albeit only 18 years old, which he did not mention), credited me with this finding. I was thrilled beyond all measure!

At that time I had never heard of Ambrosial Aromatic Yankee Cachous (of which more will be said), even though just recently I learned that it relates to one of my favorite counterstamps. Isn't it amazing that in the twenty-first century I can add to the knowledge of pieces I first collected back in 1955?

Time Brings Many Coins

Sometime around 1957 Gould offered me his personal collection of counterstamps, which he had been gathering for over 25 years. I lost no time in acquiring his holding *en bloc,* paying something like a dollar a coin for the lot. Not long thereafter the collection of counterstamped coins formed over a long period of time by large cent specialist John Gilbody was offered to me, and I acquired it as well. By August 1959 my holding of counterstamped cents comprised slightly over 600 pieces, including 25 examples of cents counterstamped by silversmiths. As the years passed, I acquired about 3,000 more cents, probably turning down twice this number (pieces stamped with stray letters, etc., which did not fit my requirements). In 1985 I acquired *en bloc* the collection of counterstamped cents built by Roy H. Van Ormer. Roy, who operated a coin shop in Washington, Pennsylvania, not far from Pittsburgh, had been collecting avidly for about a decade and had a truly fine cabinet.

Another source—a really fine one—was John J. Ford, Jr. I visited him a number of times at his home in Rockville Centre, Long Island, New York, always to "talk coins," but at the same time to buy a lot of "stuff." Recently, John and I reminisced about the coin hobby in the 1950s, and he mentioned that among all the people he ever knew, I would buy more weird, diverse, unusual, and unresearched things.[1] Often he would give me old pamphlets, or letters, or other odds and ends—figuring that he would never have time to study them properly, and that I would enjoy owning them. From John I bought a lot of counterstamped cents that he acquired from the collections of F.C.C. Boyd and Hillyer C. Ryder. In addition, John had his own interest in counterstamps, and numerous examples had been acquired here and there since the 1950s, especially during the course of his involvement with the management of the New Netherlands Coin Company.

Rich Rossa and Steve Tanenbaum were among other suppliers of counterstamped cents, and I also mention Oscar G. Schilke, Chet Krause, Alan V. Weinberg, Paul Koppenhaver, Rich Hartzog, Bob Moffatt, Cy Phillips, Joe Rose, Irwin Cohen, Jess Patrick, Ken Hallenbeck, and a mail bid sale conducted by Coin Galleries in 1989. A couple hundred more names could be added to this list. Thanks to one and all!

But, I must mention a 1989 *coup* (perhaps I would be the only person calling it that—most people would not pay attention to such coins): In 1989, Miles Coggan of the J.J. Teaparty Coin Co. came into possession of a hoard of counterstamps jumbled together loosely in a box. These had been gathered over a long period of years by the late Don Corrado Romano, proprietor of the Worthy Coin Company in Boston, which bought coins from the public via printed premium price guides, a la B. Max Mehl. The hoard yielded several silversmiths' stamps and a dozen or so other prime pieces. Lest you wonder, a silversmith's stamp on a copper cent might have had a value of $50 to $150 by that time, whereas *real rarities* such as a Proof 1895 Morgan dollar, or a Mint State MCMVII $20 crossed the $10,000 or even the $20,000 line. In fact, by that time my entire collection of counterstamped cents, gathered since 1955, cost me less than either of these two famous rarities was worth. (No, I wouldn't trade, even for the pair in MS-69 or Proof-69 grade!).

The secret to building my collection has been *patience.* Over a long period of time I have gathered many wonderful pieces, simply by maintaining my interest and being on hand when the pieces came to market. In a related but infinitely more expensive context, I have built a nice collection of Western numismatic Americana, starting with books and printed items in the 1950s—and, most recently, thinking twice and taking a couple of big gulps before buying some of the golden treasures from the *S.S. Central America.* One such gulp involved writing a check for a Kuchel & Dresel 1856 lithograph of the town of Placerville, California, for which the seller, Pia Oliver of Randall House Books (Santa Barbara, California) stated that just one other was known—in the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth. Anyway....

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[1] Conversation with John on his birthday, March 5 (2001).

Opportunity knocks but once, and I have always felt that the time to buy a long-desired item is when it becomes available. Somehow, the long-term rise of the rare coin market takes care of the economic and investment aspects. I suppose that this is "the secret that really isn't secret," that all old-time numismatists know!

In the 1970s a new figure walked onto the counterstamp stage, Dr. Gregory G. Brunk. With a consummate interest in history and research he determined to build a listing of such pieces. In the mid-1980s he visited my office in New Hampshire and spent the best part of a week poring over my large copper cents. At his request, many were photographed, and in 1987 they were featured in his impressive compilation, *American and Canadian Countermarked Coins,* later updated and revised.

Similarly, I have continued to be as enthusiastic as can be about counterstamps. In 1994 I gave a presentation, "Two Coins in One: Large Cents with Interesting Counterstamps," at the Coinage of the Americas Conference hosted by the American Numismatic Society, and over a long period of time I have written many articles on the subject for *Coin World, The Numismatist,* and other publications.

Collectors in the Past

Frossard's Hooper Collection Sale

As my library has grown I have read more old-time catalogues and magazines and have encountered many other mentions of counterstamped cents. Such links with numismatic tradition are interesting to me and serve to add to the aura and personality of each related coin in my own collection.

It is a dangerous practice to call anything "first," for the moment such reaches print, someone discovers something to antedate it. I know that selected counterstamps were collected as early as the 1860s, as will be mentioned subsequently in the study of the G.G.G. marking. The identity of the first numismatist to make a significant collection of counterstamped cents is unknown to me. However, it is certainly correct to state that Édouard Frossard's October 6, 1892 catalogue of the Collection of Joseph Hooper, Esq., Part II and Addenda, contained one of the most extensive listings of counterstamped large cents to appear in a sale catalogue up to that date.[1]

Frossard, born in Switzerland in 1837, came to America in 1858, and by 1872 was a member of the numismatic collecting fraternity.[2] In 1876 he became editor of the *Coin Collector's Journal,* published by J.W. Scott Stamp & Coin Co. In 1877 his own house organ, *Numisma,* made its debut and quickly became a point of controversy and discussion, as Frossard gave his unvarnished views of his competition and the contemporary numismatic scene, all of this in a day before libel suits were in vogue. His first auction sale, bearing the date of September 6, 1878, inaugurated a series that would eventually comprise 175 such events, including 15 conducted by his son after Frossard's death in 1899. Frossard is remembered today as a leading scholar of his era, particularly in the field of United States large cents, and as a competent cataloguer. By 1892, when the two Hooper sales were conducted, Frossard was among the leaders in the numismatic profession and was widely respected. By this time the highly-esteemed W. Elliot Woodward was in the twilight of his numismatic career, and the mantle for excellent scholarship among coin dealers had fallen on the likes of Frossard and Lyman H. Low.

Frossard's consignor, Joseph Hooper, a prominent numismatist of his era, lived in Port Hope, Ontario, Canada, and was a frequent contributor to *The Numismatist,* his "Hooper's Restrikes" column attracting special attention. He later served as president of the American Numismatic Association from 1898 until he was succeeded by Dr. Benjamin P. Wright, a prominent collector of tokens, in 1901. Like many other collectors of his era, Hooper's interests were eclectic.

The title page of the auction catalogue in question, Part II of the Hooper Collection sold as Frossard's 113th sale on October 6, 1892, reflected the diversity of the consignor's numismatic interests and noted that the sale comprised:

> Coins and medals of Canada, gold, silver and bronze coins of ancient Greece and Rome; silver coins of Brunswick, Venice, and other countries; foreign copper coins; English war medals; tradesmen's penny and halfpenny tokens; American and foreign medals and tokens; Bolen's medallic issues; United States dollars, cents, half cents; rare colonial coins; gold coins of Ferdinand and Isabella; Vernon medals; numismatic works; coin cabinets.

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[1] The author is indebted to Francis D. Campbell, librarian, the American Numismatic Society, for a copy of the catalogue listing.

[2] Frossard's biography is detailed in *United States Numismatic Literature, Volume I, Nineteenth Century Auction Catalogues,* by John W. Adams (George Kolbe Publications, 1982), pp. 68-69, from which source this information is extracted.

The sale of 502 lots, stated to be "without reserve," was conducted by Messrs. George A. Leavitt & Co., auctioneers with premises at 787 and 789 Broadway, New York City, at 2:00 in the afternoon of Thursday, October 6, 1892. Lots could be examined by prospective bidders on the day of the sale from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Leavitt Art Gallery. It was the custom of the time for a professional numismatist, such as Frossard, to prepare the sale catalogue, and for the auction itself to be held by a separate auction gallery.

The group of counterstamped cents was described as follows:

> [Lot No.] 416. U.S. CENTS. Old copper issues, 1816-1845 (the greater part early dates), punched or relief counterstamps, as circulated by firms in the States and Canada. The following is an alphabetical list of names: M.A. Abbey; Barnes & Potter, New York, 1835; Boston; A. Bell; O.P. Bell; W.H. Bailey; H.S. Burges; J. Bruso; W. Burdt; N. Boothe; A. Chapin; Cast Steel; J.W. Carr; A.F. Craig; C.H. Davis; D.O. Danforth; Devins & Bolton, Montreal; D.E. Downs; Evans Old Change, London; E.P. Everett; G. Gerry, Athol, Mass.; I.E. Gerrish; Green; G.F. Gray; F. Gibson; G.J. Guild; C.N. Gilbert; Glynn; J.W. Graham; F.G. Growell; C.G. Hayes; A.C. Hilton; C. Hall; H. Kellogg; A. Kline; I. King; E.F. Light; E. Leach; J.C. Libby; A.W. Loomis; C.O. Longley; G.A. Learned; Metr. Coffee Room, Bway, N.Y.; E.S. Mead; J.F. McKenny, Gunsmith, Saco; E.C. March; Moses; G.W. Minott; C. Munson; Oliver; A. Page; C.C. Paige; C.W. Payne; M. Perrin; James Porter; J.D. Powell; Putnam Cast Steel; P.M. Ring; J. Russell; J.H. Root; G. Starbird; Stickler; J.H. Smith; S. Swart; A.H. Somers; A.D. Sweetser; W.M. Stuart; L.L. Squire; R.E. Taylor; W. Taylor; N.J. Tracy; Tryon; A.J. Tutle; H.P. Tyrrell; Use G.G.G. and G.G.G.G.; Dr. G.G. Wilkins; F.D. Warner; A.D. Webster; A.N. Wheeler; Young the Magician; also letters, two varieties of eagles, hound, shield, etc. Unique collection, highly interesting to collectors of American tokens and coins of the Jacksonian period. No duplicates, struck on very fair to fine Cents and two half Cents. 133 pcs.

The lot of counterstamped pieces realized five cents per coin, for a total of $6.65, a price consistent with the valuation of unmarked cents of the period. In other words, the counterstamping neither added to nor detracted from the value. In the same sale four die varieties of unmarked 1826 cents, Good and Very Good grades, fetched five cents each, as did three examples of non-stamped 1837 cents, each Very Good.

Frossard was somewhat careless in his cataloguing, for "J.F. McKenny" should have been J.F. McKenney, "E.C. March" was really E.C. Marsh, "A.D. Sweetser" was given instead of the correct A.D. Sweetsir, and A.J. Tuttle was listed incorrectly as "A.J. Tutle."[1] Eighty specific counterstamps were enumerated, plus "letters" (apparently coins stamped with stray letters), two varieties of eagles, a hound, a shield, and the enigmatic "etc." Which counterstamps appeared on the two half cents in the lot was not disclosed. Further, we do not know the dates of the copper cents which hosted the counterstamps. Knowing such dates is exceedingly important, for in directory searches for a given counterstamper, it is often useful to begin with the latest date observed, as it is logical that pieces were marked at least by that year, or perhaps later, thus saving a lot of work in earlier directories.

What happened to the Hooper counterstamps is not known. Perhaps they were retained as a lot and remain today in some dusty corner of an attic, or in a safe deposit box, unnoticed and forgotten. Or, more likely, they were dispersed and exist today in scattered collections of persons other than counterstamp specialists. At least a few of the coins have been forgotten, for they were unknown to Duffield, Gould, Hallenbeck, and Brunk, all of whom were apparently unaware of Frossard's catalogue listing. For example, Brunk in his 1987 text knew of the YOUNG / THE / MAGICIAN stamp on an 1841 dime, an 1842 half dollar, and on Spanish-American silver two-real pieces dated 1774 and 1809, but not on a large cent as owned by Hooper.

The Walter Gould Hoard

The May 1914 issue of *Collector's Blue Book* contained information sent by Walter B. Gould, of Winterport, Maine. The writer stated that he had accumulated *two bushels* of large cents, and by the time that he wrote to the editor he had found "between 80 and 100 that have names die-sunk on them."[2] The following stamps were reported on cents dated from 1818 to 1855:

> Names: J.A. Allen; R.B. Arell; F. Bascom; Cast Steel (three examples); J. Collett; F.J. Damon, Patent; G. Delano; Devins & Bolton, Montreal; J.M. Fardy; O.J. Fitch; P. Fonan; E.L. Fuler; E.B. Gilman; T.J. Gorgers; Griswold & Co.; J. Haitt; E.W. Loomis; E. McNamara; J.O. Megquire; J.N. Melon; New York; N. Newton; Norman, Boston; B. Parker (four examples); Patten; Orren Peavey; F.J. Philbrook; H.K. Porter; C. Rich; E.E. Robbins; J. Hoyt Rowland; V. Royal; W.J. Scott; A.B. Seymore; C.A. Strange; J.W. Strange; Frank E.

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[1] Misdescribing counterstamps seems to be endemic with cataloguers, for Dr. Gregory G. Brunk has estimated at least 5% of historical citations are incorrect in one aspect or another (correspondence with the author, March and April, 2001).

[2] The article is reprinted in my book, *The Strange Career of Dr. Wilkins: A Numismatic Inquiry*, (Bowers and Merena Galleries, 1987), pp. 9-12.

Thompson, Boston; 23 Steel; U.S. VII; Use G.G.G. & G.G.G.G.; L.N. Watts; N.B. Webb; W.C. Webber; L.S. Whe; Dr. G.G. Wilkins; M. Wilson; and B.H. Woods. (Total: 52)

Initials (alphabetically by first initial):[1] C.F.C.; D.C.S. & H.B.B.; D.N.D.; E. & R.; E.B.H.; E.N.D.; E.W.R.; F.W.; G.C.C.; H.F.C. & H.P.C.; I.E.B. & J.F.G.; J. & G.; J.B.P.; J.F.G.; J.R.B.; J.W.; T.J.S.; S.S.K. & C.N.C.; T.A.L.; T.F.F.R.; U.S.D.; W.A.; W.D.J.; W.H.; and W.W. (Total: 25)

Date: 1801 (1)

Grand total: (78)

Common to both the Hooper and Gould holdings were these counterstamps: Cast Steel; Devins & Bolton, Montreal; Use G.G.G. & G.G.G.G.; and Dr. G.G. Wilkins. This fits in with logic, for today the most plentiful of all large cent counterstamps are those bearing the Devins & Bolton imprint, with Dr. G.G. Wilkins pieces close behind. CAST STEEL is an imprint known to the extent of dozens of impressions and simply refers to a type of metal used for tools, farm implements, and certain other manufactured items produced by many different individuals and firms.

The disposition of Walter B. Gould's coins is unknown, but unlike the Hooper Collection coins catalogued by Édouard Frossard, the listing of the Gould coins has been incorporated into the writing of later researchers.

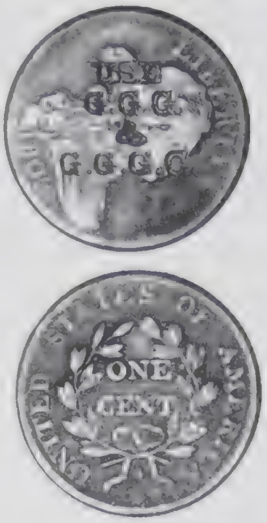
The Great G.G.G. & G.G.G.G. Guessing Game

"USE G.G.G."

When I began collecting counterstamped large cents in 1955, among the first items I acquired were several pieces counterstamped with the enigmatic slogan, USE / G.G.G. / & / G.G.G.G. I also had a few with a simpler version: USE / G.G.G.

What all of these Gs stood for was anyone's guess. The conjecture of Maurice M. Gould was that G.G.G.G. was an advertisement for Goddard's Great Goose Grease, and that the abbreviated G.G.G., represented Goddard's Goose Grease. This contention was repeated by Russell Rulau in his book, *American Merchants Tokens, 1845-1860.*

Why anyone would want goose grease is a matter for debate, but in the nineteenth century it was apparently popular, at least in certain quarters. A dictionary-size hardbound catalogue, *McKesson & Robbins' Prices Current*, 1883, indeed lists non-branded goose grease at the wholesale price of 75 cents per pound. It seems reasonable that someone named Goddard might have sold goose grease just like McKesson & Robbins did, and implored American citizens to partake of the benefits of the grease by stamping United States cents with the suggestion "USE / G.G.G."



An early copper cent of 1802 stamped on the obverse with USE / G.G.G. Presumably, this was effective advertising in its day—and many who received such coins in change were indeed prompted to "use G.G.G." However, in time the meaning of G.G.G. became lost.

Another theory suggested that one of the G's stood for gonorrhea, and that G.G.G. and its expanded cousin, G.G.G.G., were cures for this unfortunate affliction in the days before penicillin. In my own research I came across many advertisements for George C. Goodwin, a Boston compounder and seller of patent medicines during the mid-nineteenth century. I excitedly concluded that this was the source for at least two of the G's: George Goodwin. How about "George Goodwin's Goose Grease" for G.G.G.G? Sounded reasonable to me!

George Goodwin Gleanings

In the 1980s I became a fellow of the Massachusetts Historical Society through the sponsorship of well-known numismatist John W. Adams. Not long thereafter I determined to track down everything I could find about George C. Goodwin. I spent a day at the Society and looked through dozens of Boston periodicals of the mid-nineteenth century and all of the city directories. Around this time, in 1985, Robert Sagers disclosed that he had a cent counterstamped with USE / GOODWIN'S / GRAND / GREASE JUICE / FOR THE HAIR / G.G.G. This sealed the matter.

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[1] Alphabetization by the first initial follows the style used by Dr. Gregory Brunk, et al., but is not logical, as if a stamp were to be identified as to issuer, information concerning that issuer would be found under the person's surname, not first initial. Thus, in a hypothetical instance, if the initials J.Q.P. were found on a cent, and if it were indexed under J, then chances are diminished for cross-referencing it to the actual issuer, John Q. Public. It really should be listed as "P., J.Q." to facilitate further research.

Not long after learning about the Sagers find, I rediscovered some older references. In going through my collection of W. Elliot Woodward's auction catalogues I came across his sale, of April 28 to May 1, 1863, in which Lot 1457, was described:

> Goodwin's Grand Grease Juice for the Hair, G.G.G., struck over a U.S. cent, very curious.

Today, credit should go to the estimable Woodward for being the first to publish the variety in its full form. Among other early citations I found this item in John W. Haseltine's Centennial Coin and Curiosity Sale IV, July 17-18, 1876:

> Lot 207: "Use Goodwin's Grand Grease Juice for the Hair"; stamped on a cent of 1835.

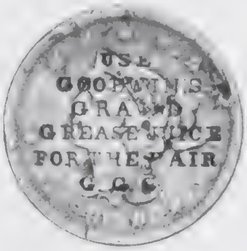
At a program I gave on counterstamps at the Coinage of the Americas Conference on October 29, 1994, there was a question-and-answer period. Dr. George J. Fuld—whose knowledge of arcane numismatic byways never ceases to amaze me—commented rather casually that G.G.G. coins were listed in Horatio Storer's book published in 1931, *Medicina in Nummis.* When I returned home, I secured a copy by mail from the American Numismatic Association Library in Colorado Springs. Lo and behold! Storer identified G.G.G. as his No. 7446:

> Godwin's [*sic*] Grand Grease Juice (for the hair), USA.

This goes to show that history, and, often, numismatic research, goes in circles!

In time, I had located enough information on George C. Goodwin to write a small monograph—including where he lived, with whom he was associated, and some of the products that he sold (most of which were made by others). In 1859-1860 his inventory included:

> Brandreth's Pills, Wright's Pills, Ayer's Pills, Moffatt's Pills, Herrick's Pills, Langley's Bitters, Richardson's Bitters, Burnett's Cocoaine, Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup, Marshall's Snuff, Parson's Rat Exterminator, Wood's Hair Restorative, Russia Salve, McLanes Vermifuge and Pills, Ayer's Cherry Pectoral, Ayer's Sarsaparilla, Kennedy's Discovery, Brown's Troches, Mustang Liniment, Schenck's Syrup, Peruvian Syrup, Bininger's liquors, Wolfe's Schnapps, Fahnestock's Vermifuge, Lyon's Kathairon, Haynes' Balsam, Wistar's Balsam, and Pin-Worm Syrup.



A well-worn copper cent of 1840 counterstamped with USE / GOODWIN'S / GRAND GREASE / JUICE / FOR THE HAIR / G.G.G. Only a handful of such coins are believed to exist today.

Perhaps the first auction offering was for a coin, date not specified, listed by W. Elliot Woodward in his sale of May 1, 1863, Lot 1457: "Goodwin's Grand Grease Juice for the Hair, G.G.G., struck over a U.S. cent, very curious." This may indicate that Woodward, who lived in Roxbury, a suburb of Boston, had never seen such a counterstamp before—indicating that they may not have circulated widely.

Unfortunately, no mention was made here of G.G.G., G.G.G.G., or any other products originated by Goodwin.

George Goodwin Goes

In correspondence, Dr. Gregory Brunk related that he had been searching records relating to George C. Goodwin, with no luck regarding G.G.G. Then, by a stroke of luck, he found a citation that the July 1855 *New Hampshire District Court Copyrights* indicate that *M.H.* Goodwin was the maker of this product, although they do not indicate the city where G.G.G. was manufactured. During that month he received licenses for the trademarks G.G.G., G.G.G. or Q of F, Goodwin's Grand Grease Juice, and Goodwin's Grand Grease Juice or Quintessence of Fat. The compound was called "The Great American Preparation for the Establishment, Growth and Beauty of the Human Hair."

Dr. Brunk related:

> I went to the Wisconsin Historical Library in Madison before Christmas and checked the microfiche of early New Hampshire city directories, but can't find him listed in any of the 'big' cities. I don't have access to the correct years of the *Patent Office Gazette* to try to trace his various trademarks, but if he copyrighted them in New Hampshire, he likely did so in Washington, as well.
>
> Since you are much closer to New Hampshire—obviously—than I, you might have more luck in tracing the history of M.H. Goodwin.

In the same era, one or two original bottles were found with the embossed inscription:[1] GOODWIN'S / GRAND / GREASE JUICE / QUINTESSENCE / OF / FAT.

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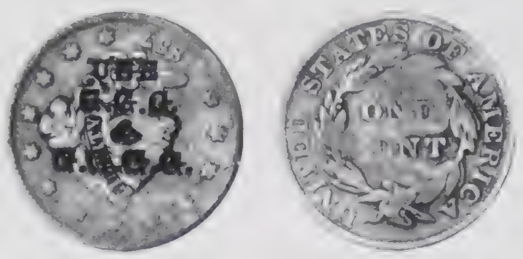
[1] Jim Holst, *Pontiled Medicine Price Guide*, 6th edition, listed as G-58; cited as Greer-668. Separately, in 1996 Richard Cannon reported finding an original bottle. Such bottles are slightly more than six inches high, are about two inches wide and about one inch deep. The shape is oval, aqua color, square collar, open pontil on base.

Exeter Enters the Equation

I looked through quite a few New Hampshire directories and could find no M.H. Goodwin associated with patent medicines or any related subject. There the matter stood for several years. Other matters intervened, and I did not think much about M.H. Goodwin.



Advertisement on a cent for Goodwin's Grand Greasejuice (G.G.G.) and Goodwin's Grand Glittering Globules (G.G.G.G.)—the mystery solved!

In the evening of March 12, 2001, I was curled up in a comfortable chair listening to recorded music and browsing through a large book I had examined many times earlier—interesting and important as the very first edition of what became a standard—the 1856 edition of George Adams' *The New England Business Directory*. I had a four-inch reading glass in one hand and was reading some of the fine print in the advertisements. All of a sudden, at 10:03, this popped out at me:

> Charles H. Goodwin, Druggist & Manufacturing Chemist. Dealer in Drugs, Medicines, Dye Stuffs, Perfumery and Fancy Goods. Inventor, Manufacturer and Proprietor of the following preparations:
>
> G.G.G., or Q. of F., GOODWIN'S GRAND GREASEJUICE, OR QUINTESSENCE OF FAT, the great American compound for the embellishment, preservation, growth, and beauty of the human hair.
>
> The unrivalled breath perfume, G.G.G.G., GOODWIN'S GRAND GLITTERING GLOBULES, or AMBROSIAL AROMATIC YANKEE CACHOUS.
>
> G.G.T., and Q. of Q., Goodwin's Great Tobaccojuice, and Quintessence of Quicksilver, the great American remedy for the *Cimex Lecularius*, or common bed bug.
>
> Also of Goodwin's Flavoring Extracts, and Madame Delectable's Handkerchief Perfume.
>
> All orders to be addressed to Charles H. Goodwin, Chemist, at GOODWIN'S GRAND GREASEJUICE DEPOT, No. 49 Water Street, Exeter, N.H.

This was the last and, presumably completely conclusive, evidence in the long search for the meaning of G.G.G. and G.G.G.G.

It is interesting to see that Goodwin took artistic license, and in his search for alliteration combined Grease Juice into Greasejuice, a "G word." This seems have inspired him to create "Tobaccojuice" as well. Of course, such creations have been a part of literature and promotions for a long time. In the 1870s a cute little monograph was written, which contained only words beginning with S, in which instance the city of "Sanfrancisco" is mentioned.

From the preceding text it is reasonable to conclude that G.G.G. was first marketed about July 1855, when the patent was obtained. At that time there was no mention of G.G.G.G. However, G.G.G.G. must have appeared before early 1856, when *The New England Business Directory* was published. As all large copper cents with just G.G.G. are dated 1855 or before, and all of the 1856-dated cents and the solitary 1857-dated copper cent I have seen have had the G.G.G. & G.G.G.G. stamp, this would indicate that 1856 was the introduction year for G.G.G.G., which for this year, and continuing into early 1857, was marketed side-by-side with the pioneer G.G.G. However, in 1856 the G.G.G. punch was continued in use for small coins which would not accommodate the larger stamp—such as the little 1856 half dime in my collection imprinted USE / G.G.G.

Now, of course it is possible that these products were sold after early 1857, but counterstamping was no longer used to advertise them.

Goodwin and the Local Scene

The next step was to do some poking around in the town of Exeter. In due course a selection of advertising notices from the *Exeter News-Letter and Rockingham Advertiser*, published in Exeter, furnished some interesting insights into Goodwin's promotion for G.G.G. and his clever use of words. Another product, G.G.T. was mentioned, but it is not known to have been advertised by counterstamping coins.

July 2, 1855:

> **Charles H. Goodwin,**
> **Druggist and Chemist**
>
> Respectfully returns his thanks to his friends and the public in Exeter and the adjoining towns, for the liberal patronage extended to him from his first occupancy of Store, No. 49 Water Street, until the present time, and expresses a hope that a system of strict attention to *his business* and *their wants*, will secure a continuance on the same.

He also takes this opportunity to inform those who may be interested, that he has lately made large purchases of Drugs, Medicines and Chemicals, Essential Oils, &.c., of the best importation and manufacture; which additions to his former stock, will enable it to bear favorable comparison as to quantity, variety and quality, with that of any other store in this vicinity. He also wishes to call attention to his superior advantages for compounding Physicians' Prescriptions and the dispensation of Family Medicines.

Having given nearly eight years constant attention to the business, part of that time in one of the first Drug and Prescription establishments in Boston, and keeping constantly on hand a large variety of the purest materials in the finest state of preparation, he feels confident that he cannot be excelled, either in the *quality* of his preparations or in *accuracy* and *dispatch*, even by the best city stores.

Physicians are invited to call and examine pure drugs of his own pulverization and official preparations of his own make, kept constantly on hand in quantity. Having facilities of apparatus, &.c not usually attainable in country drug stores, any article not kept, will be made to order in the shortest possible time, and in the best manner.

In connection with the above may be found a large and well selected stock of Fancy Goods, consisting of Cloth, Tooth, Hat, Hair, and Nail Brushes in great variety; Porte-monnaies of Leather, Shell, Papier-mache, and Velvet, of various sizes and patterns; Knives, Razors and Scissors of Jonathan Crooke's and other approved manufacture; Ivory, Shell, Horn, Buffalo Horn and India Rubber, Back, Puff, Side and Dressing Combs; Lubin's Perfumery, German Cologne, &c. &c., all which will be freely shown, and sold upon the most reasonable terms, at No. 49 Water Street, Exeter, N.H.

The great G.G.G. product was first announced with some fanfare through an extensive notice, complete with exclamation points and descriptions of how the name was selected, in the issue of July 30, 1855:

G.G.G. or Q. of F.
The Great

AMERICAN Preparation, for the embellishment, preservation, growth and beauty of the

HUMAN HAIR!

which has given such universal satisfaction, as sold for several years, without a name, by the *INVENTOR, MANUFACTURER, and PROPRIETOR,*

CHARLES H. GOODWIN,
DRUGGIST, CHEMIST & APOTHECARY,
EXETER, N.H.

is no longer a nameless compound! It is now offered to the world in a new and attractive form, CHEMICALLY PERFECTED in composition, INIMITABLY IMPROVED in perfume, and APPROPRIATELY CHRISTENED by a convention of

"KNOW SOMETHING" FRIENDS

convened expressly for the purpose.[1] Being well aware of the growing popularity of every thing AMERICAN, and of the desire now existing among the progressive portion of our population that all our national MOTTOES, WATCHWORDS, AND INSCRIPTIONS should be strictly and purely AMERICAN!! the members of the Convention were instructed by the Proprietor to depart from the long established practice of our investors, of composing from two or more words of some FOREIGN TONGUE, a name for their compounds.

Rejecting, therefore, all GREEK, LATIN, and HEBREW appellations, a name was at once agreed upon, which being extravagantly aboriginal, would secure the universal patronage of "SAM'S BOYS" throughout the Union, while as it, at the same time, expresses at once the remarkable properties of his preparation, it would also meet with the voluntary approbation of "STRAIGHT WHIGS," "OLD LINE DEMOCRATS," AND "THE REST OF MANKIND."

The article thus introduced to the public is

Goodwin's Grand Greasejuice,
Or, Quintessence of Fat.

This article, composed of CASTOR OIL AND GLYCERINE, with other animal and vegetable ingredients, scientifically combined in such definite chemical proportions, that the product is possessed of all the valuable qualities of the various oleaginous substances, in common use, without any of their deleterious or disagreeable properties, making it, in fact, equivalent to a real FLUID EXTRACT OF FAT, synthetically prepared from its simple elements.

CASTOR OIL

Sometimes called *Palms Christi Oil,* is obtained by expression from the seeds of the Palma Christi, or

---

[1] This "Know Something" Friends comment is a pun on the Know-Nothing Party, a political faction of the era, best known as the American Party. The Know-Nothings, established as the secret Order of the Star Spangled Banner in New York City in 1849, became popular, and many branches were established in other towns and cities. When asked what the Order did or stood for, members were instructed to say, "I know nothing"—hence the derivation of the Know-Nothing Party. Tenets of the group included restrictions on immigration and the desire that immigrants had to live in the United States for 21 years before becoming citizens. The party flourished until the presidential election 1856, after which it split into factions. Members with a northern point of view (pro-abolitionist) generally allied with the Republican Party (which had its beginnings in Exeter in October 1853) and those with southern leanings found the Democratic Party to be appealing. In 1860 scattered members of the American Party, mostly in the border states, became important in the Constitutional Union Party, whose candidate for president was John Bell of Tennessee. • The "strictly and purely AMERICAN!!" comment in Goodwin's next sentence reinforces the political pun.

Castor Oil Plant (Ricious Communes). Being colorless, with little or no odor, it would be preferred, by many persons, to any other oil for the hair but its gummy, sticky nature prevents its general use for this purpose. In its clarified state, however, as it exists in GREASEJUICE.

GLYCERINE

Is the sweet moistening principle of oils, which was discovered by the celebrated chemist, Scheele.[1] Experiment has proved it to be possessed of remarkably undrying properties, to such an extent as to resist evaporation even at a considerable temperature. *A portion has been placed in a heated oven by the side of a piece of roasting meat, and found to have undergone no evaporation when the meat was entirely cooked.*

Franklin Bache, M.D., of Philadelphia, an eminently scientific man, in an article on Glycerine, written for the United States Dispensatory, says of it, that "when exposed to a red heat, it takes fire and burns with a blue flame, but that it does not evaporate on exposure to the air, and cannot be distilled without decomposition." In Pharmacy it has been found that pills, extracts, and other substances incorporated with it, are preserved moist, soft, and free from moldiness.

It has been used by Dr. Startin, of England, Surgeon to the London Coetaneous Institution, an as external application in eruptions, attended with a preternatural dryness or harshness of the skin, with decided advantage. Dr. Durkee, of Boston, has also used it with success. Dr. Startin says—"when applied to the skin it remains moist, forming a coating or varnish, which is not distinguishable from the ordinary secretion of the part." It is to the scientific combination of these two remarkable substances that GOODWIN'S GRAND GREASEJUICE owes its excellence as a preparation for the hair. That it is entirely different from any article ever before offered to the public, will at once be seen by a comparison of its claims and effects with those of others. All other preparations are offered to the public under the false pretense, backed up by thousands of forged certificates, that a persevering use of them will restore the hair to heads that are bald. *This, no preparation will do.* In many cases a partial baldness, and loss of hair occasioned by sickness, is succeeded by a new and flourishing growth upon the return of health. This restoration of the hair is often attributed to the use of some of the numerous *medicated* humbugs of the day, when, in fact, nature accomplished the work without assistance.

Not satisfied with thus imposing upon the credulity of the public, they go still further, and inconsistently recommend their worthless compounds for all diseases of the skin, headache, rheumatism, neuralgia, &c. To do this, these unblushing impostors issue flaming handbills and pamphlets, which, *but for the false quotations from the writings of* PRETENDED FOREIGN PROFESSORS WHO NEVER EXISTED, and the copied "notices of the press" which they contain, — which notices are obtained by paying for their insertion as "editorials," at the rate of twenty-five cents a line,—WOULD BE REGARDED AS BURLESQUES UPON THE SYSTEM OF OPERATIONS OF THE QUACK-MEDICINE MAN.

These preparations, *with high-sounding names*, generally consist of small quantities of impure, rancid oils, mixed with New England rum, or a solution of soap in the same fluid. *To cover the offensive, rancid odor of the oils used, large quantities of the irritating oils of cloves, cinnamon, rosemary, &c., are used, any of which* are powerful enough to destroy the nerve of a tooth, and consequently cannot act otherwise than injuriously upon the delicate roots of the hair. When made with soap, as a lubricating material, instead of oil, the proprietors dwell with great emphasis upon the fact that they are *free from all oil or grease*, stating at the same time that they will not soil the hat or bonnet. *Their real reason*, however, for omitting the oil, is its additional expenses. When applied to the hair, the liquid portion of these mixtures evaporates in a short time, leaving the hair either coated with a corrosive alkaline soap, or a sticky, rancid substance, resembling a mixture of oil and resin. In either case the hair is rendered harsh and dry, and injured in its appearance.

On the other hand, *G.G.G. or Quintessence of Fat* is recommended merely as a dressing for the hair, claiming for it, in addition to its beautifying qualities, only such effect for the growth and preservation of the hair as may result from its cleansing and moistening properties, by the removal of dirt and dandruff.

It is not sold as a *remedy for headache, neuralgia, or diseases of the skin*, to which *no hair oil can be* adapted, and which come under the province of the experienced physician. What pre-eminently distinguishes it from all other compounds, is the fact that instead of being *free from oil*, like those above described, *it is expressly recommended as containing a large proportion of rich oily matter* of the purest kind, combined in such a manner as to penetrate the hair, giving it a *silky moisture*, thus counteracting the bad effects of our naturally dry climate, and close, overheated rooms. No rancid or otherwise impure oil is used in its composition, its perfume even being the mild, fragrant extracts of flowers, beautifully blended together, instead of the powerfully heating and irritating oils derived from spices. Such indeed is its purity, that the proprietor will guarantee that it may be kept for years, exposed even to the heating rays of the sun, without change.

The public are requested to bear in mind that the terms, *Greasejuice* and *Quintessence of Fat*, should not lead to the idea that it has any resemblance to *Grease or Fat*, in an unprepared state, which remain upon the outside of the hair, to the injury of the hat or bonnet, while the real

---

[1] Carl Wilhelm Scheele (1742-1786), highly accomplished Swedish chemist best known for his experiments with oxygen, but important in many other studies as well.

FLUID EXTRACT OF FAT

at once penetrates the hair, removing all harshness and dryness, *rendering the hair soft, moist and glossy*, freeing it from dirt and dandruff, giving it a richer and darker color, and a beautiful and delicate perfume.

For sale in large bottles. Price 25 Cents. And in bottles somewhat more than four times as large as the twenty-five cent size, each in a neat fancy box, at $1.00.

Manufactured and Sold at Wholesale and Retail, by the Proprietor,

CHARLES H. GOODWIN,
DRUGGIST AND APOTHECARY, AND MANUFACTURING CHEMIST,
49 Water Street, Exeter, N.H.

All for sale by all respectable Druggists, Fancy Goods Dealers, Merchants and Postmasters, in all cities, towns, villages and hamlets throughout the United States of America, Europe, North and South America, and the Islands of the Ocean.

Although Goodwin seems to take issue with other promotions and names, and casts G.G.G. as distinctively American, the preceding copy is not without its own puffery, and the present writer sincerely doubts that "all respectable druggists" offered G.G.G for sale at the time, and that anyone seeking same in "the islands of the ocean" would be apt to be greeted with a blank stare!

That Goodwin was a poet or at least enlisted the aid of someone who was, is evidenced by this scheme of rhyme in the issue of August 13, 1855:

GREASEJUICE

A Dialogue Between a Hindoo and a Greek
GREEK: Who do the ladies love the best?
HINDOO: The men whose hair is neatly dressed.
G: What will this great effect produce?
H: Nothing like Goodwin's Grand Greasejuice.
G: O Gracious, what a horrid name!
H: But still the stuff is all the same.
G: Has it no other name but that?
H: Some call for *Quintessence of Fat*.

G: That name is harder yet to mention. What could have been the man's intention?

H: He meant its virtues to express, in any way to make a noise, *a foreign name* you must confess would never take among *Sam's Boys*.

G: In suiting Sam he has succeeded and found the very name he needed, but while its Hindoo patronage bespeaks how will this Greasejuice go among we Greeks?

H: Go, Sir—like thunder—go, like buckwheat cakes, nor need you wonder, when you hear; it makes the frowziest heads; all shades of browns and reds, richly to glow again, with glossy locks abundant, and of auburn stain, censorious man for shame! Do you suppose that just "What's in a name," Will keep a class of men, who else might shine, with heads all bristling like a porcupine?

G: O! no!—you're right, I see my error, there was no reason for such terror; "A rose would smell as sweet by any other name," and if Greasejuice chance to beat in the great race for fame, if it from men great praise should win, and bring the inventor in the tin, old fogies who now smile contemptuous at the sound will own after a while, that it brought the buyers round; but now, before we go, pray tell where do they this Grand Greasejuice sell?

H: At C. H. GOODWIN's, Number Forty-Nine, and sir—if you do so incline, the name which you at first so hated, can greatly be abbreviated; for on each bottle you will see the initial letters, G.G.G.

In the same poetic vein Goodwin tells of another product, G.G.T., also known as Q. of Q. (not known to have been advertised by counterstamping):

G. G. T. and Q of Q.

A Dialogue Between a Chewer and his Wife.

Wife: The horrid Bed Bugs will not let me rest.

Husband: I know you say so; but, why they mo[1]??? And trouble you, I cannot see; they never trouble me.

W: You cannot see — oh no! you lie and sleep, just like a log you lie; they never trouble you, but I can see, I know full well the reason, why; they never trouble you.

H: Then pray do tell? I'd like to know.

W: You'd like to know? Indeed? Well, this is why, for twenty years you've chewed tobacco, your system with its juice is running o'er. Its odor you exhale at every pore, this fact is undisguised — then need you be surprised that Bed Bugs should avoid and from you creep, while I am so annoyed I cannot sleep.

H: Then do as I do, prove your doctrine true, I'll find Tobacco; you can learn to chew.

W: I take you at your word; I soon can learn, although at first it will my stomach turn, then there's the children, they, as well as me, from head to foot are bitten as you see, there's little Willie and Jemima too, I have no doubt can learn as well as you, but, for this toothless infant at my breast, who cannot chew —the juice must be expressed. We'll feed it with a spoon, and then, no doubt, full soon 't will sleep as sound as you.

H: I rather guess 't would sleep in death, is there no better way, your sufferings to prevent and drive these bugs away?

W: Oh yes, my dear husband, if so you're inclined, a remedy sure, at Goodwin's you'll find, for he has invented and puts up to sell, a mixture which answers this purpose right well; seven times seven he numbers his store, that is just 49, no less and no more....

H: Yaw.

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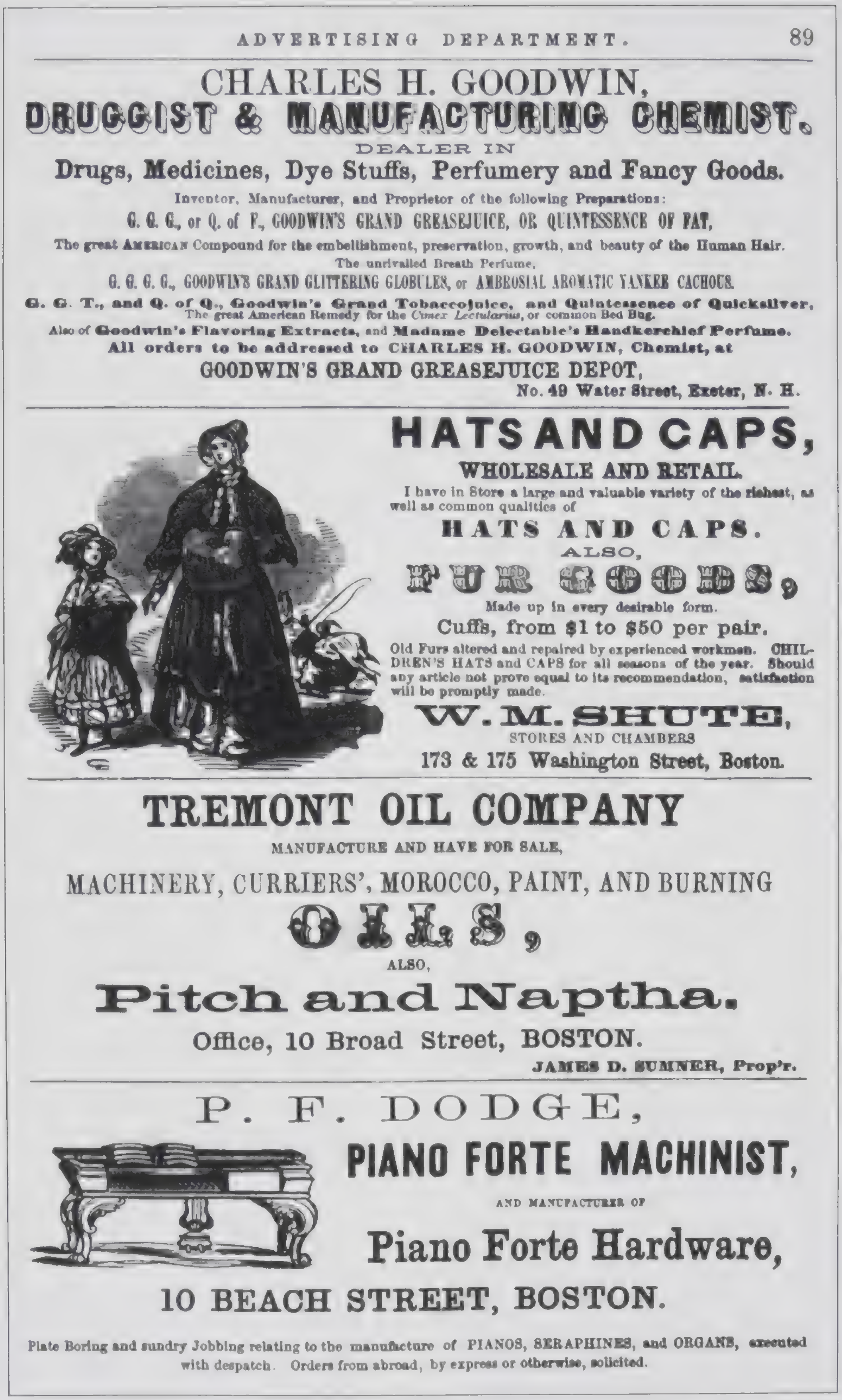
[1] Short for *molest?*



ADVERTISING DEPARTMENT. 89

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DEALER IN

Drugs, Medicines, Dye Stuffs, Perfumery and Fancy Goods.

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No. 49 Water Street, Exeter, N. H.

HATS AND CAPS,

WHOLESALE AND RETAIL.

I have in Store a large and valuable variety of the richest, as well as common qualities of

HATS AND CAPS.

ALSO,

FUR GOODS,

Made up in every desirable form.

Cuffs, from $1 to $50 per pair.

Old Furs altered and repaired by experienced workmen. CHILDREN'S HATS and CAPS for all seasons of the year. Should any article not prove equal to its recommendation, satisfaction will be promptly made.

W. M. SHUTE,
STORES AND CHAMBERS
173 & 175 Washington Street, Boston.

TREMONT OIL COMPANY

MANUFACTURE AND HAVE FOR SALE,

MACHINERY, CURRIERS', MOROCCO, PAINT, AND BURNING

OILS,

ALSO,

Pitch and Naptha.

Office, 10 Broad Street, BOSTON.

JAMES D. SUMNER, Prop'r.

P. F. DODGE,

PIANO FORTE MACHINIST,

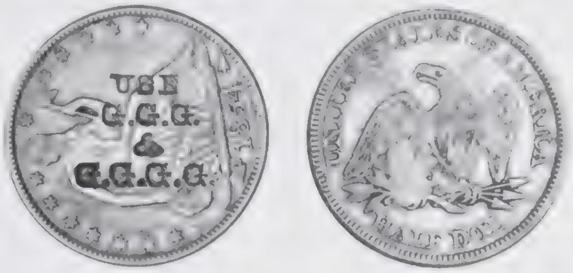
AND MANUFACTURER OF

Piano Forte Hardware,

10 BEACH STREET, BOSTON.

Plate Boring and sundry Jobbing relating to the manufacture of PIANOS, SERAPHINES, and ORGANS, executed with despatch. Orders from abroad, by express or otherwise, solicited.

The "discovery" advertisement is seen at the top of this page in the 1856 edition of George Adams' compilation, *The New England Business Directory.*

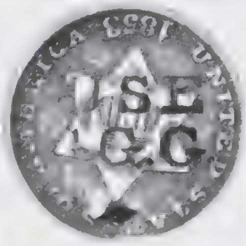


Although Charles H. Goodwin preferred the ubiquitous copper cent as the medium to carry his cryptic G.G.G. & G.G.G.G. message far and wide, some other denominations were utilized, such as this impression on an 1854 half dollar.

W: There he will offer for your free inspection, and free acceptance or as free rejection; a preparation, useful, grand and new, he calls it G.G.T. and Q of Q., though he so doing knew he run the risk, that some would take it for a mere burlesque. That such may read and understand him better, he in a circular explains each letter which on the wrapper meets your wondering eyes, and quickly tells you what they advertise; these at his store you freely can obtain, and if you read you'll surely call again.

H: Just so.

W: Quintessence of Quicksilver there you will find with the poisonous juice of Tobacco combined, and like all the rest of Goodwin's inventions, its virtues exceed his greatest pretensions, it proves certain death to each bug that approaches, all give up their breath, from the great Spanish roaches, to spiders and earwigs wherever they're gathered. If once with this mixture, their holes are well feathered.



And this advertisement for G.G.G. which virtually overwhelms its host coin, a tiny 1853 silver three-cent piece, shown twice actual size.

All orders for Goodwin's Grand Tobacco juice and Quintessence of Quicksilver, the Great American remedy for the Cimex Lectularius, or common Bed Bug, should be addressed to CHA'S H. GOODWIN, Chemist, at Goodwin's Grand Grease-juice Depot. No. 49, Water Street Exeter, N.H.

Now, as I write these words, my little collection of these counterstamps, gathered over a period of more than 45 years, has special meaning. As time permits I will track down more information about Charles H. Goodwin—not that the preceding will not suffice! In the course of visiting Exeter, looking around Water Street, and checking local histories, I found that the site of Goodwin's business, a two-story clapboard structure (per an early photograph), became in 1915 the Ioka Theatre, still standing today—a movie house with its own interesting era, having bridged the silent era to the present.

I will keep looking. Who knows, perhaps I can find some of those Goodwin's Grand Glittering Globules! And, as to the oily (or non oily, depending upon how the advertising is interpreted) G.G.G. and the tobacco-juice laden G.G.T., who knows?

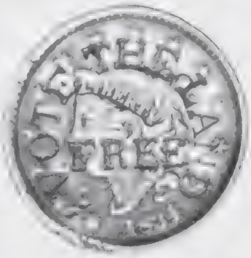
I Love a Mystery

"Vote the Land Free"

I love puzzles and mysteries! When I was in the fourth grade I collected a full set of the Hardy Boys books, written under the *nom de plume* Franklin W. Dixon, and devoured every word. I can still remember Frank and Joe Hardy, their pal Chet, the bumbling Chief Collig, and the other characters. As a seventh grader I read each of the 56 short stories and four long tales of Sherlock Holmes. To this day I consider "A Study in Scarlet" one of the most influential narratives I have ever read. As a Penn State student I did, or tried to do, the *New York Times* crossword puzzle each day, a practice that I continue today (I think that puzzle editor Will Shortz must be one of America's greatest literary geniuses).

Counterstamped cents offer mysteries waiting to be solved—a la the silversmith hallmark revelation of the late 1950s. Even today such important (to me) discoveries as the deciphering of G.G.G.G. provide a great deal of excitement.

While writing the present "adventure" and reviewing my collection of countermarked coppers, I paused to consider one of the most heralded of cent counterstamps, the coins marked VOTE THE LAND / FREE.



VOTE THE LAND FREE counterstamped on an 1834 large cent.

There was not much research to be done on this one, as per conventional wisdom reiterated in many numismatic texts. In popular parlance, this was a no-brainer: the stamp was applied in *1848* by advocates of the Free Soil Party, who advocated free soil; that is, the admission of new states to the Union under the proviso that all should be free, and no slavery would be allowed.

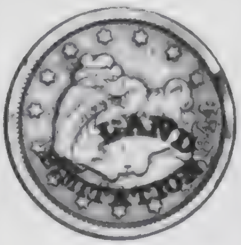
However, there seemed to be a few technical flaws in this nice scenario. In over 40 years of searching, I have never been able to match the VOTE THE LAND FREE words with any specific slogan used by the Free Soil Party, although the sentiment is correct.

Also, in studying the availability of coins with this counterstamp, I have never personally seen any piece dated after *1844*. Per contra, the 1987 text on counterstamps by Dr. Gregory Brunk and the more recent *Standard Catalog of United States Tokens 1700-1900*, by Russell Rulau, each listed a few stray pieces dated from 1845 to 1848. Seeking to learn more, I wrote to both authors in April 2001, only to learn that neither had ever seen a post-1844 coin nor a photograph of one, but simply took the information from earlier listings. (By the time the words you are now reading were edited, the earlier Brunk and Rulau citations were withdrawn by those authors—but this is ahead of the story.)

Soon, the investigation took a roundabout turn:

Land Limitation

A particular cent in my collection bears the date 1844 and the neatly applied counterstamp in two curved lines, LAND / LIMITATION. In reviewing this piece I was struck by the similarity to VOTE THE LAND / FREE. Both seemed to be political in a way, and both specifically included the word LAND.



1844 cent possibly counterstamped by National Reform Association advocates. Marked LAND and LIMITATION, each in a curved logotype punch.

After some searching in old texts and also on the Internet, I learned that *Land Limitation* was one of the tenets of the National Reform Association (NRA), a group initiated by George Henry Evans from the membership of the Locofocos, National Trades Union, and the Workingmen's Party.

On March 13, 1844, a meeting of working people, under the name of National Reform Party, of the NRA, was held in New York City at Chatham and Mulberry streets. A committee was appointed to investigate "a depression of labor, and a social degradation of the laborer." The committee filed a report which was accepted at the next meeting.

The National Reform Association resolved to use the "land question" as the prime element in its political statements, and laid out three objectives:

1. Homestead legislation by the federal government to allow workers and others to acquire public lands free of charge.

2. Legislation to be enacted by various states to exempt land such as farms from seizure in debt collection.

3. *Land limitation* (precise wording) to restrict the ownership of large amounts of land by wealthy individuals and other entities, so that land would become more easily available to the general population.

In the following year, 1845, the NRA joined with advocates of the Fourierist movement to schedule the first of a series of annual National Industrial Congresses.

I thus concluded that my 1844 cent stamped LAND / LIMITATION was likely to have been marked by National Reform Association advocates in the year indicated.

A Matter to Contemplate

I thereupon reviewed the cents in my collection marked VOTE THE LAND FREE, and noticed that they were grouped in a large cluster dated 1843 and earlier, and a solitary 1844.

I thought it worthwhile to investigate if an issuer could be found for early in the year 1844, by which time 1844 cents would not have been widely distributed, but 1843 and earlier cents would be in great abundance. As these words are being written, the National Reform Party of *Land Limitation* slogan identification, seems to be a strong possibility.

My own cluster of 1843 and earlier coins was reinforced by an earlier-compiled listing supplied by Dr. Brunk (including the "stray" post-1844 pieces which, as noted, he has not personally verified):

> Cents: 1812 (2 examples), 1816, 1817 (2), 1818 (2), 1819, 1824, 1825, 1827, 1829 (2), 1833, 1834, 1835 (2), 1836 (3), 1837 (4), 1838 (2), 1839, 1840 (2), 1841 (8), 1842 (3), 1843 (8), 1844 (3), 1845, 1846, 1848, and 5 of unknown dates (presumably, worn smooth); 1843 quarter dollar; 1826 English halfpenny; Spanish-American two-reales: 1811, 1813, 1819.[1]

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[1] This listing includes pieces that were in the present author's (QDB's) collection in the 1980s when Dr. Brunk examined it; thus, his inventory is not in addition to mine, but includes most of mine. • A May 30, 2000, comment from Dr. Brunk stated that upon review, he found that the 1845 and 1848 listings were typographical errors, and that the 1846 was not relevant as it was a hand-stamped piece made up from single letter punches and not related to the counterstamp logotype in question. Thus, the "net" listing of Dr. Brunk reveals NO pieces dated after 1844. • A letter from Dr. Brunk, June 15, 2001, noted that in recent times he had encountered "two different types of 'modern' counterfeit VOTE THE LAND FREE pieces from two different sets of letter punches." Further regarding counterstamps, "More and more fantasies are appearing in antique stores and on the internet that are made from individual letter punches." While addressing such items is beyond the purview of the present commentary, as is the case with any rare coin, token, or medal, buying from an *established professional numismatist who guarantees authenticity* is easy enough to do and in the long run helps avoid such "traps."

I then consulted various sources relating to the National Reform Association to see if VOTE THE LAND FREE, or the word VOTE, could be found in any other of its slogans.

New York in 1844

The NRA newspaper, the *Working Man's Advocate*, July 6, 1844, included this (a sample from a much larger amount of material in print):

> In this Republic, all that the Creator designed for man's use is ours—belongs, not to the aristocracy, but to the people. The deep and interminable forest, the fertile and boundless prairie, the rich and inexhaustible mine.... We regard the public lands as a capital stock, which belongs not to us only, but to posterity....
>
> The first great object, then, is to assert and establish the right of the people to the soil; to be used by them in their own day, and transmitted—an inalienable heritage—to their posterity.... This fundamental principle shall be established as the paramount law, with the least possible delay....[1]

The slogan, "Vote yourself a farm," is said to have originated with Evans in 1844, after which it caught on and was used by others, including in the 1860 presidential campaign. However, I have not come across the specific slogan, "Vote the land free," in this or any other context of the era save for the counterstamped cents.

In the 1844 election, both political parties included the disposition and proceeds of *public land* in their platforms. The Whigs, who met in convention in Baltimore on May 1, 1844, nominated Henry Clay as their candidate.

The Democratic Party met in Baltimore on May 27, and after three days of tumult and in-fighting the delegates named James Knox Polk, a "dark horse," after better-known contenders, including Martin Van Buren (who was the odds-on favorite early in the convention), Lewis Cass, James Buchanan, John C. Calhoun, Levi Woodbury, and two others had been considered.

In 1845, the National Reform Association joined with advocates of the Fourierist movement[2] to schedule the first of a series of annual National Industrial Congresses. By 1848, the membership of the NRA had been absorbed into other political movements, especially those broadly advocating abolition, including the Free Soil Party and Free Democratic Party.

The preceding leads to this conclusion:

I suggest that VOTE THE LAND / FREE counterstamp was applied by members the National Reform Association in spring 1844, soon after its March meeting, thus accounting for the date distribution of the cents involved. By the end of May 1844, other parties had come to the fore in the public eye, with the November presidential election in the offing.

A fertile area for study might be New York City newspapers of the March-May 1844 period. *If* any later coins can be found with this stamp, I suggest that these are stray pieces either produced casually or in 1848 when someone sensed that the Free Soil Party had what seemed to be similar sentiments (actually, a study of the two groups reveals many differences). However, one might think that if the Free Soil Party had engendered these counterstamps they would not have changed key words, and instead of VOTE THE LAND / FREE the stamp would have read VOTE THE *SOIL* / FREE.

Moreover, the LAND / LIMITATION counterstamp has the exact wording of a resolution of the National Reform Association, uses the word *land*, and indicates that *counterstamping coins was practiced by the NRA in 1844*, providing a reasonable segue to the issuance of VOTE THE LAND / FREE pieces at the same time.

Lafayette Revisits America

Arriving at Castle Garden

How easy it is to make assumptions, particularly if two or three pieces of information and some "numismatic tradition" are used as a basis, even though hard facts are not at hand. Such is the case with my involvement in the beautiful counterstamps applied to copper cents, silver half dollars, and certain other coins in 1824.[3]

In 1824 the Marquis de Lafayette, French hero of the American Revolution, revisited America and was proclaimed by Congress to be "The Nation's Guest." Numerous printed, medallic, and other tributes were created during the course of his stay in the United States, which extended into the year 1825.

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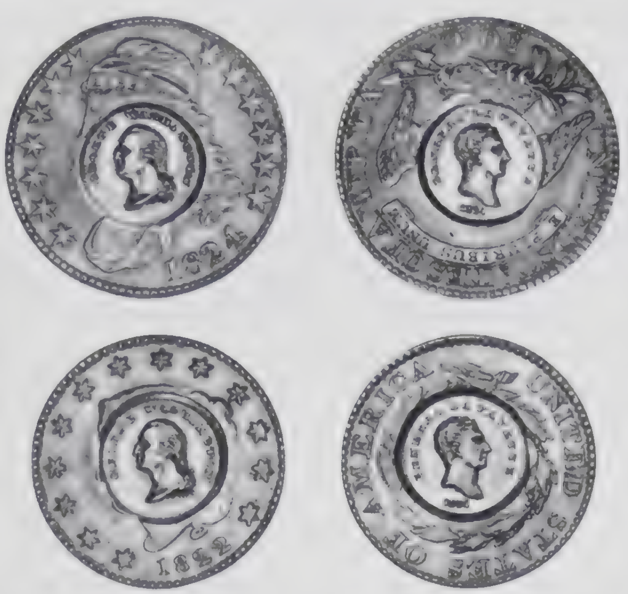
[1] Many commentaries and essays on this subject were published in 1844-5; e.g., "Monopoly of Land the Great Evil," by Lewis Masquerier, *Young America*, New York City, NY, July 19, 1845. In this and other essays, land and soil are mentioned as much as they were to be later in the decade by the Free Soil Party (1848). However, land was by far the more preferred of the two words in National Reform Association and related commentaries, perhaps consistent with the use of the VOTE THE LAND / FREE slogan.

[2] After utopian theorist Charles Fourier died, fellow Frenchman Victor Prosper Considérant (1808-1893) accelerated the popularization of his theories, some of which found adherents in America, although the movement was mostly concentrated in France. In the United States, Horace Greeley and Albert Brisbane wrote favorably of Fourier's ideas, and this prompted the establishment of several short-lived communities.

[3] In addition to specific credits I express my appreciation to Gregory Brunk, Russell Rulau, and Steven Tanenbaum for suggestions for this "adventure."



A pair of counterstamped coins, a half dollar and a copper cent, so marked in September 1824. The half dollar was once in the collection of Belden Roach, later the author, still later Stewart Witham, and even later back in my collection. Exhibited at the American Numismatic Society, November 1999.

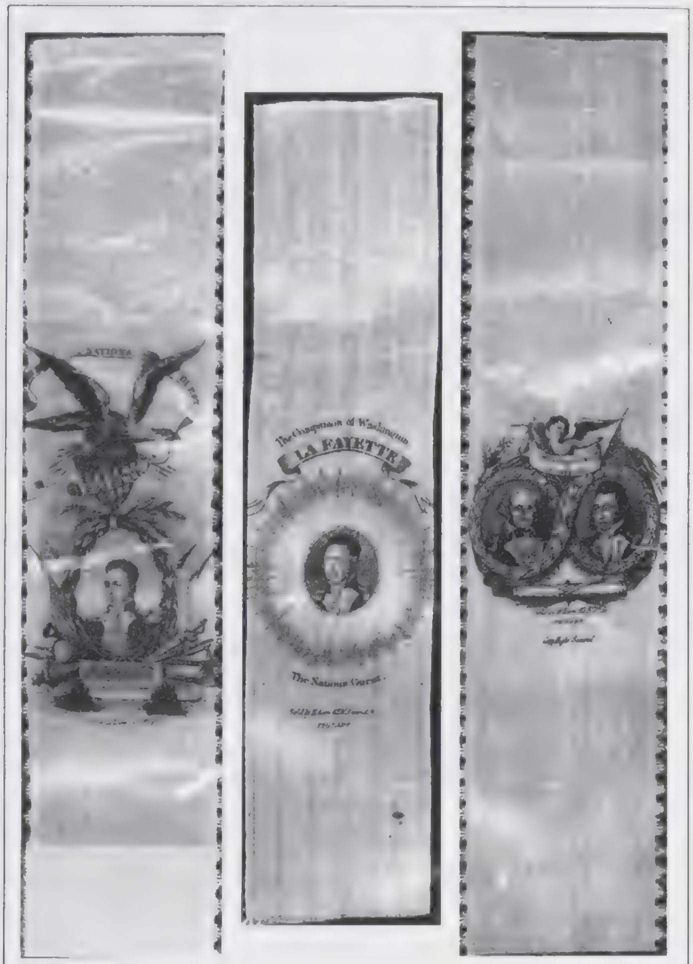
James Hardie, A.M., in *The Description of the City of New York,* printed and published by Samuel Marks, New York, 1827, told of the memorable occasion:

> I now come to an event which will long be remembered with pleasure by the inhabitants of this metropolis. On Sunday 15th August, General LaFayette, who had for some time been anxiously looked for, arrived at Staten Island, where he remained at the mansion of his excellency the late Daniel D. Tompkins, then vice president of the United Sates, till the day following, when he made his public entrance into this city.
>
> To this illustrious man, the United States are more indebted for that liberty and independence which they now enjoy, than to any individual now living. His gratuitous and highly important services as a Major General in our army, his unceasing exertions to procure aid from France, and his repeated and very liberal supplies of money for the use of our half naked and suffering soldiers, during the Revolutionary War, were still fresh in the minds of our fellow citizens. Hence he was treated with a most cordial welcome—a degree of enthusiasm almost bordering on rapture.
>
> He landed at Castle Garden amidst the acclamations of many thousands, the ringing of bells, and the firing of cannons. All the merchant and coasting vessels in our harbour hoisted their colors, and the ships of war, packets and numerous steam boats, were decorated with flags of different nations in the most elegant manner. In short, no demonstration of joy, which the ingenuity of our citizens could invent, was wanting to express the pleasure which was so generally felt on the arrival of this veteran hero, this distinguished Guest of the Nation, at our metropolis.
>
> After tarrying a short time at Castle Garden, he was escorted to the City Hall, where he was received in form by the Common Council, and addressed in a very appropriate speech by the Hon. Wm. Paulding, Junr., then mayor, to which he made an affectionate and very suitable reply.
>
> From thence he was conducted to the lodgings, previously provided for him, by the Common Council, at Mr. Bunker's splendid hotel in Broadway. During his short residence amongst us, he visited our navy yard and garrisons, our public institutions, theatres, &c., and was every where received with that gratitude, to which, from his eminent services, he was so justly entitled. He daily kept a levee, at certain hours, in the City Hall, where he was incessantly visited by crowds of citizens, with whom he conversed with great familiarity, and readily shook hands with everyone, who came forward for that purpose.
>
> The time of his departure having arrived, he was escorted by a numerous detachment of artillery, infantry, and cavalry, to Kingsbridge, where they took an affectionate leave of their noble and amiable friend. Although, when he landed at this port, he was in the 68th year of his age, and walked lame in consequence of his wound, he, in the space of thirteen months, visited most of the principal places in the United States, from North to South, and from East to West; and so ardent was his desire to behold the vast improvements, which, since his last visit, had taken place in every part of our country, that it is highly probable he traveled with more dispatch and made greater progress than had ever been done in the United States by any one, whether young or old.
>
> On the 13th day of September, after taking an affectionate leave of the President, and heads of department, he proceeded to the frigate Brandywine, Commodore Morris, which had been fitted up for his accommodation, and in which he landed at Havre in November following.

The Lafayette / Washington Counterstamps

Among the more interesting numismatic items associated with this event are the aforementioned Lafayette-Washington counterstamps made from the dies of a 9 mm. medalet impressed on the obverse and reverse of contemporary circulating coins. The obverse (usually) is inscribed GENERAL LAFAYETTE, with the date 1824 below, surrounding a portrait of Lafayette facing right. The reverse die has the inscription GEORGE WASHINGTON in a partial circle surrounding a portrait of Washington facing left.

Most examples of counterstamped cents seen by me have Washington on the obverse of the host coin and Lafayette on the reverse, although, as it will be seen, this is more a "Lafayette" item than a "Washington" item—if priorities were assigned. I also have a



Several different engraved vignettes as printed on silk ribbons issued as souvenirs by H. Horn, 82 North Second Street, Philadelphia, 1824-5. In the course of Lafayette's return visit to America, during which he was designated as "The Nation's Guest" by Congress, many engravings, jewelry items, ribbons, etc., were produced, as were counterstamped coins.

pair of counterstamped half dollars, one with Lafayette on the obverse and the other with Washington on the obverse, one of which is shown above. It seems to me that while Lafayette was the preferred obverse, there was no hard and fast rule at the time these were made.

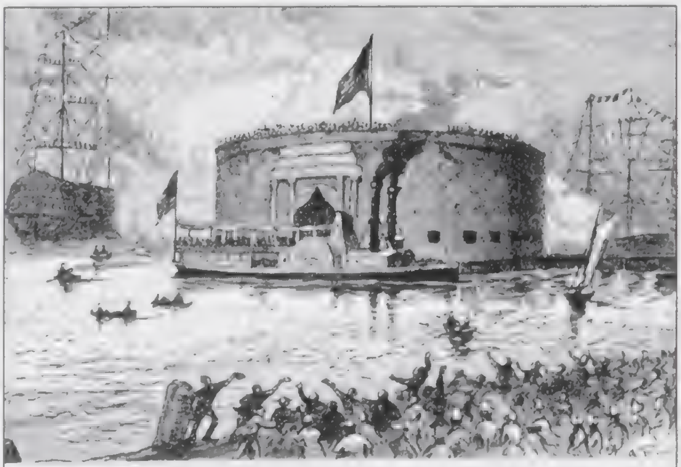
In *The Numismatist* of June 1921, as part of his 1919-1921 serial study on counterstamps, Frank G. Duffield described the following under the heading, "Impressions of Heads and Busts on U.S. Coins":

> One of the most interesting stamps found on United States coins is that of the bust of Washington on one side and the bust of Lafayette on the other side. These pieces are not numerous, and bring good prices when offered for sale. The occasion for stamping was Lafayette's visit to this country in 1824, but where and when the stamping was done has not been satisfactorily determined. The version most generally accepted is contained in a letter received some time ago from one of our correspondents, as follows:
>
> "When you come to the United States section of your article on countermarked coins, play up with a good story regarding the Washington and Lafayette heads countermarked on various coins.
>
> "There are different stories regarding this stamp, all of which have been questioned as to correctness. The story most generally told is that while Lafayette was being entertained at the mint during his visit to the United States about 1824, in compliment to Lafayette, each of his party was privileged to offer a coin on which the stamp was made from punches that had been prepared especially for the purpose. I have a United States Half Dollar with a very good stamp of Lafayette's head."

Another story is to the effect that during a procession in honor of Lafayette, coins bearing the stamps were thrown from one of the carriages to the crowds lining the streets through which the procession passed.

A Tradition Develops

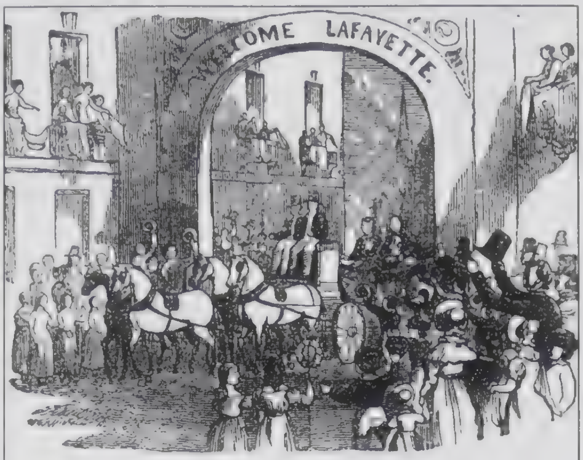
I have dearly loved this particular counterstamp for a long time and, following conventional wisdom (of which more will be related), considered Charles Cushing Wright to be the most likely candidate as the engraver. I spent quite a bit of time collecting a large file on Wright—quite enough to write a *book* about him. However, when and if this is ever done, the Lafayette / Washington medalet and counterstamps will be "scraps on the cutting room floor." Of this, more will be said.



The sidewheel steamer bringing Marquis de Lafayette to America is shown next to Castle Garden, in lower New York City, as he arrived as, per the designation of Congress, "The Nation's Guest." In 1824 and 1825 he traveled through the 24 different states on a journey that comprised about 5,000 miles.

Lafayette, the French hero of the American Revolution, was eulogized by Daniel Webster: "Fortunate, fortunate man! Heaven saw fit to ordain that the electric spark of liberty should be conducted through Lafayette, from the New World to the Old." (*Our First Century, Great and Memorable Events*)

By spending over 45 years in the effort, I was able to acquire several counterstamped cents and a pair of half dollars. I have also collected dozens of citations, augmented by extensive information supplied by Stewart Witham and John J. Ford, Jr.



In various cities arches were erected across main thoroughfares to honor Gen. Lafayette. His entourage consisted of Lafayette; his son, George Washington Lafayette; his secretary, A. Lavasseur; a servant; and drivers. The party was carried in three carriages consisting of an open barouche decorated with flags and drawn by four horses, this used in processions; a closed stagecoach drawn by four horses; and a covered baggage coach drawn by two horses. (*Pictorial History of the United States,* S.G. Goodrich, 1852)

Several very early listings appeared in W. Elliot Woodward's sale catalogue of April 28-20, 1863:

> Lot 2412 "Bust to left George Washington, reverse with bust of General Lafayette 1824, silver." This was an example of the *medalet*. [This piece realized $3.25, which, for those who like to compare things, was about *three times* the market price of an 1856 Proof Flying Eagle cent at the time.]
>
> Lot 2413: Impression from the same dies on a half dollar of 1824. Fine and rare. [Realized $2.50]
>
> Lot 2414: Same over a U.S. cent of 1823, fine and rare. [Realized $2]

In October 1867, Woodward brought to auction the collection of United States coins formed by Joseph J. Mickley, one of the great figures in early American numismatics. A particular item sold on October 28 was accompanied by this description:

> Lot 3041. 1820 cent stamped with bust of Washington, reverse of head of Lafayette. Dies by Wright. Fine and scarce.

Here we have the Wright attribution. The cent brought $3.75.

On January 21, 1870, when M. Thomas & Sons, Philadelphia auctioneers, sold the estate of Chief Engraver James B. Longacre (who served in that post 1844-1869), an 1824 half dollar with this counterstamp was offered, and was bought by dealer Edward D. Cogan for $11. I cannot help but wonder if this is the same piece catalogued by Cogan and sold in December 1868 in the Root Collection catalogue, at which time it brought $4.25. This citation is mentioned as a reflection of Longacre's numismatic tastes—he collected pieces that were *interesting* to him (also see Adventure No. 26).

In his 1885 book, *Medallic Portraits of Washington,* W.S. Baker attributed the counterstamp dies to Charles Cushing Wright, probably drawing from Woodward. Thus, "conventional wisdom" was brought into full authority.

Just to add to the list of engravers mentioned as the creator of this fascinating piece I quote Henry Chapman's description of an item in the Capt. Andrew C. Zabriskie Collection sale, June 3-4, 1909:

> Lot 122. Bust left of George Washington. Reverse of General Lafayette. 1824. Die loop on edge. By Wright and Bale, New York. Silver Extremely Fine. Very rare.

Chapman, a fine numismatist who stood at the top of the profession, apparently had picked up on a comment that Wright was the engraver, and sought to add his own expertise (solidly based or otherwise), knowing that Wright at one time was a partner in Wright & Bale. What Chapman overlooked was that the combination of C.C. Wright and James Bale existed circa 1828-1833, and was not in place in 1824 when these pieces were made.

At the 1914 Exhibition held at the American Numismatic Society, Howard Rounds Newcomb, a well-known Detroit collector, displayed an 1820 dime with this counterstamp, describing its authorship with a caveat, "*Probably* by the die cutting firm of Wright & Bale." Newcomb seems to have copied Chapman, who seems to have added his own expansion to Baker, who may have obtained the attribution from Woodward. Where Woodward got it, I have no clue.

Years passed.

Numismatists were born and died. A casual (presumably) statement by Woodward in time grew into numismatic fact or, more gently, numismatic tradition. I had no reason to doubt it. Nor did just about every other modern writer who discussed the pieces.

The Kleeberg Discovery

Then this, to prove that we were all barking up the wrong numismatic tree:

In November 1999 Dr. John Kleeberg, at the Coinage of the Americas Conference, American Numismatic Society, provided revelatory information that the maker of this counterstamp was an engraver named Joseph Lewis, of New York City, *not C.C. Wright!*

How could this be?

Dr. Kleeberg reported that his research in newspaper and other accounts of 1824 seemed to eliminate Wright and focus upon Robert Lovett (Senior), J.D. Stout, and Joseph Lewis. Each had plied the engraving trade in New York city and each had made medallions for Lafayette's visit. However, the matter was sealed by this comment by Kleeberg:

> On September 20, 1824, Joseph Lewis advertised in the Philadelphia *National Gazette* saying that he had sold over 2,000 gold and silver medallions with a portrait of Lafayette on one side and Washington on the other. This description fits our counterstamp.
>
> Furthermore, Lewis's medallion was the most successful one in New York. Lovett advertised once, Stout twice, but Lewis advertised his medallion at least five times.
>
> His medallion was adopted by the Castle Garden ball committee as the official one. It was specifically mentioned in the papers. The evidence before me now indicates that Joseph Lewis was the engraver who made the Washington/Lafayette medallion. He prepared his dies in two weeks: the medallions were ready by September 2nd, and Lafayette had arrived only on August 15th.

A newspaper advertisement by the aforementioned Lewis made this offer:

> **BALL ORNAMENTS**
>
> The Subscriber has a few very splendid Neck Chains; also, Silver do., suitable for the ball, just received from Paris. Also fine Gold & Silver Badge Medals, adopted by the Committee, and recommended to be generally worn on that occasion, the best proof of the superiority of the likeness. LEWIS, Engraver and Artist in general.
>
> Store No. 3 Wall Street, near Broadway, distinguished from any other, by his late improved Patent Door Plate projecting from the door. For the convenience of ladies and gentlemen, who may not be supplied with the above badge, a quantity ready attached to chains and ribbons is deposited at the bar with the proprietors of Castle Garden.

The *New York Evening Post* reported September 4, 1824:

> White and black dresses over satin were mostly worn, with a profusion of steel ornaments and neck chains of gold and silver, suspended to which were beautiful gold and silver badge medals, bearing a correct likeness of Lafayette manufactured for the occasion.
>
> The gentlemen had suspended from the button hole of the coats a similar likeness, and with the ladies, had the same stamped on their gloves.

The *New-York Spectator,* Friday, September 10, 1824, included this notice:[1]

> "Likenesses of Fayette—
>
> "Observing a notice of medallion likenesses of La Fayette, we called in at Mr. Lewis, the Engraver, at No. 3, Wall Street, and were so well pleased with them as to purchase one. It is an excellent likeness, equal to any we have seen; the head of the General in gold, on a silver ground. The medallions are of two sizes, and both are very neat and beautiful little ornaments. We understand the committee of managers for the grand fete have adopted them, and we doubt not that they will be generally worn.
>
> While upon this subject, we would also refer to the beautiful kid gloves, ornamented by a likeness of Fayette, by Durand, for sale by Mr. Campfield, corner of Broadway and Duane Street, and also by Mr. Chesterman, (as mentioned yesterday) corner of Nassau and John streets.
>
> *The Nation's Guest.*—We stated yesterday that Gen. La Fayette would dine with the Cincinnati Society, at Washington Hall. The *Mercantile* says the Hall was beautifully decorated for the occasion, with flags, evergreens, &c. and in the evening was handsomely illuminated. The Museum was also illuminated in the evening, and displayed in front a full length portrait of the General.
>
> Today, we are informed, the General will visit the various Public institutions of the City. On Friday evening, the Grand Fete at Castle Garden will take place, and will be honored with his presence. It is understood the General will leave this city on Saturday, for West Point, Newburgh, and Albany, and visit the towns on the east of the river on his return.

The preceding 1824-dated notices leave the reader hungering for more information—as counterstamps on *coins* are not mentioned. Hopefully, a search of other American newspapers of September 1824 will bring more details to light.

In his Coinage of the Americas Conference Dr. Kleeberg revealed that C.C. Wright had cut dies for some souvenirs for the 1824 visit, but these were for *buttons* made in Connecticut. If it is some small consolation for my long wild-goose chase after Wright as the author of the counterstamps, I am pleased that Kleeberg found the button information in a large archive of Lafayette material I had sent to him for study. I had never read the little brochure illustrating and describing the telltale buttons!

Sharing My Favorites

I love my counterstamped large cents, and if time and space were not a consideration, it would be fun to illustrate and describe several hundred different specimens. As it is, practicality intervenes. The pieces I show below are not necessarily the rarest but represent a selection of "with story" pieces that caught my eye as I looked through my collection.

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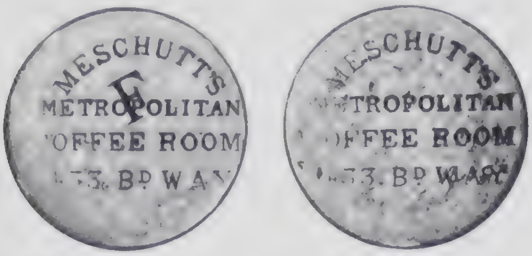
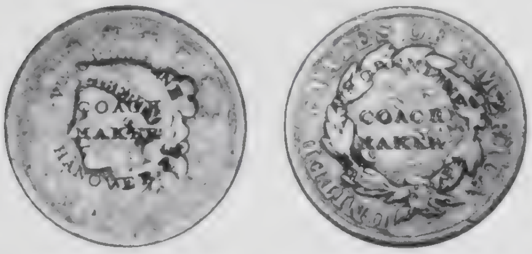
[1] Citation furnished by Karl Moulton.



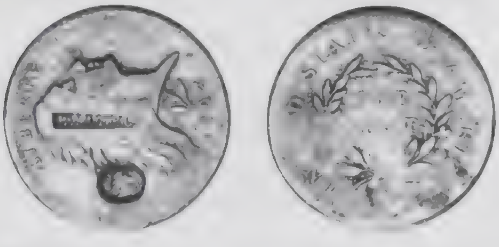
1802 cent, worn nearly smooth, but counterstamped on both sides with this legend: MESCHUTT'S / METROPOLITAN / COFFEE ROOM / 433. BdWAY, a souvenir of a long-forgotten restaurant in New York City. The stamp MESCHUTT'S / METROPOLITAN / COFFEE ROOM / 433. BdWAY is large and contains many letters.

The stamper, proprietor Frederick Meschutt, found that the logotype punch was best impressed upon well-worn large cents with fairly smooth surfaces, as is evidenced by surviving pieces. Most coins observed have the counterstamp sharp but the host coin worn nearly smooth, indicating that the stamp was applied to a well-worn coin. Had the stamp been applied to a sharply defined coin which then spent years in circulation after having been stamped, the counterstamp would be worn away to a greater extent than is evident.



Cent of the 1830s era stamped on both sides with the inscription: WM. GRUMBINE / COACH / MAKER / HANOVER, PA. I've had this coin in my collection since the 1950s—and, by now, it is a warm numismatic friend.

Grumbine was a coach maker and also operated a grocery store in Hanover, the last located at Carlisle Street and Centre Square. I can suppose that the logotype punch used to counterstamp the cent was made for other purposes than for impressing coins, perhaps to stamp brass fittings or ornamentation on his coaches, or to mark his nameplate. What a thrill it will be if in some dark barn, or corner of some museum, a coach by Grumbine could be found with this identical mark!

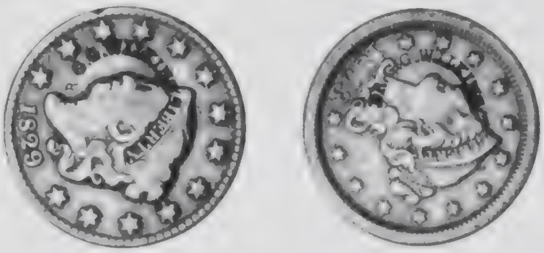


1793 Wreath cent, a numismatic classic in its own right, counterstamped "BRADBURY" in a hallmark punch, by Theophilus Bradbury, a Newburyport, Massachusetts silversmith and jeweler. The coin is also stamped with a punch depicting an eagle in a vertical oval.

Theophilus Bradbury was born in Newburyport, MA, November 22, 1763. He married Lois Pillsbury of Newburyport, October 3, 1792. Theophilus, Sr., was a goldsmith in the 1790s, continuing until his death in Newburyport, September 6, 1803. The couple is believed to have had a son, known as Theophilus 2nd, born circa 1793, who in 1815 was a partner in Theophilus Bradbury & Son, the firm which continued the father's name.

Newburyport has a rich numismatic heritage, especially in the activities of Jacob Perkins, who, no doubt, knew Bradbury. In 1800 Perkins, a skilled diecutter and engraver, created medals observing the death of Washington, inscribed, HE IS IN GLORY, THE WORLD IN TEARS. No doubt Bradbury also knew an eccentric entrepreneur and sea trader who became the subject of *Lord Timothy Dexter of Newburyport Mass.*, and its sequel, *Timothy Dexter Revisited*, both by John P. Marquand. On High Street the yard of "Lord" Dexter was decorated with dozens of life-size statues of historical and biblical figures. Not far away the bustling harbor of Newburyport was host to sailing ships constantly going to and coming from the West Indies and other distant centers of opportunity.

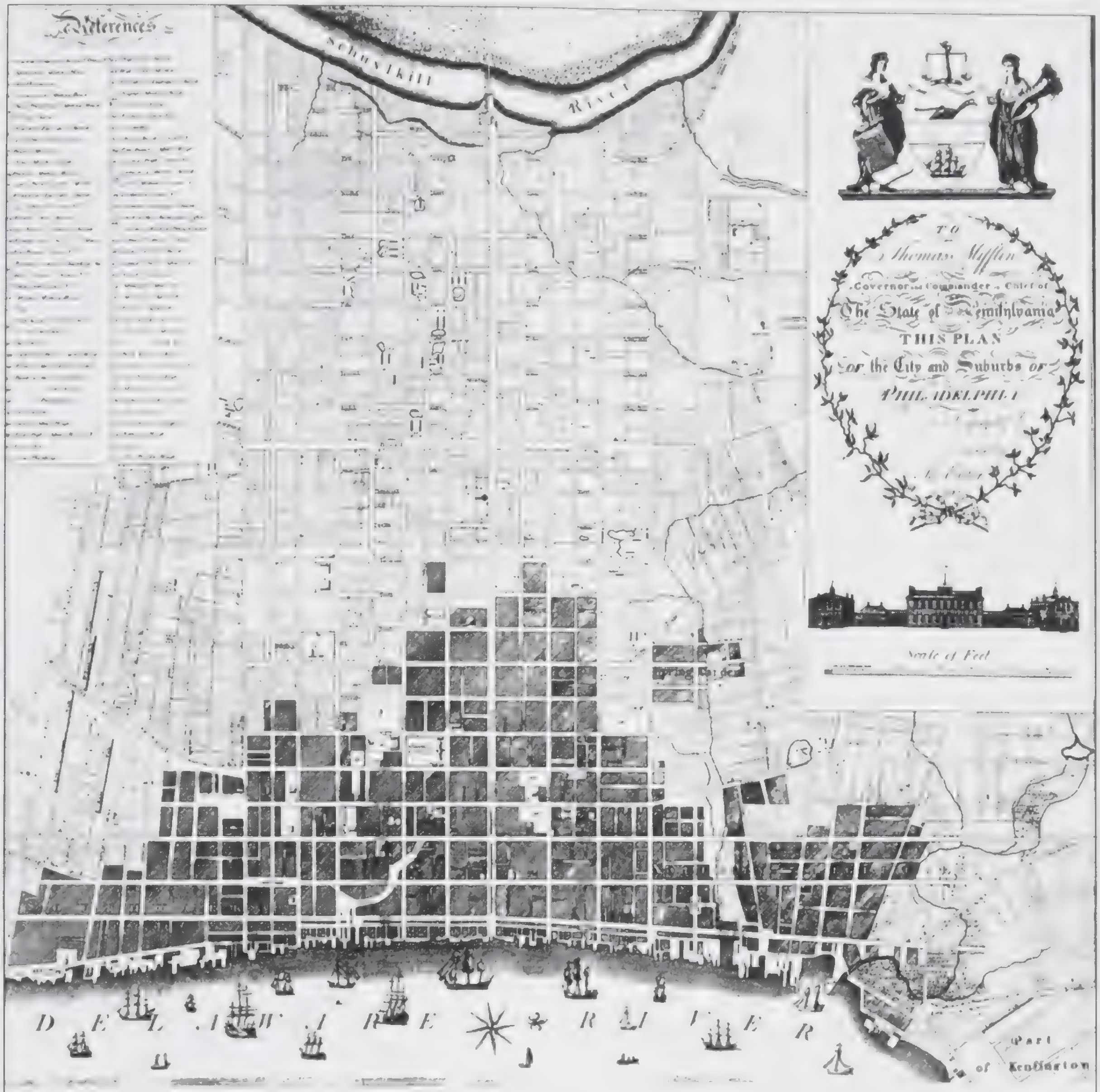
Whenever I gaze upon this lovely 1793 cent I muse about old-time Newburyport. To me, the markings *add value* to the cent, although most numismatists might feel otherwise, as the 1793 is a highly-prized key date.



Dr. G.G. Wilkins of Pittsfield, New Hampshire, was, in a word, a *character.* Whether he was formally a doctor I do not know, but for a number of years he practiced dentistry—this in addition to other activities including operating a restaurant and compounding patent medicine. On the main street of Pittsfield he displayed a live bear in a cage. He seems to have been a rascal of sorts, and was accused of burning down the barn of someone who had crossed him, and of passing counterfeit money.

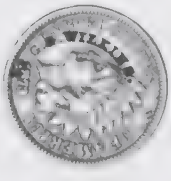
Fascinated by his actions, I delved into old newspapers, journals, and the like. My finding were published in 1987 in a monograph, *The Strange Career of Dr. Wilkins: A Numismatic Inquiry.* Later, based upon information in this text, a historical marker was erected in Pittsfield next to the building Wilkins once occupied.

Wilkins' usual stamp reads DR. G.G. WILKINS and is curved in an arc to match the space on the obverse field of a large cent just in front of Miss Liberty's face. In that location he applied the vast majority of his counterstamps, at least 80% to 90% of his output. Such coins are the most plentiful of any *United States* counterstamper, and in the overall field of U.S. cent stamps are second only to Devins & Bolton (of Montreal). Much more elusive are Wilkins' stamps on United States silver coins and on foreign issues.

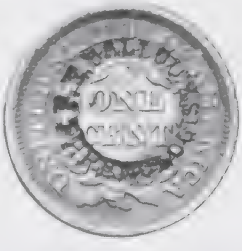

References
Schuylkill River
TO
Thomas Mifflin
Governor and Commander in Chief of
The State of Pennsylvania
THIS PLAN
of the City and Suburbs of
PHILADELPHIA
Scale of Feet
DELAWARE RIVER
Part of Kensington

Plan of the City and Suburbs of Philadelphia, 1794, drawn by A.P. Folie and engraved by R. Scot and S. Allardice. Scot later became chief engraver at the Philadelphia Mint. Among the 64 buildings and locations specifically mentioned under "References" the newly-established (in 1792) Mint was not listed.

During the first full year of Philadelphia Mint operations, 1793, three main types of copper cents were made: the Chain, Wreath, and Liberty Cap types. Counterstamping such pieces began at an early date, as evidenced by the 1793 Wreath cent marked "BRADBURY" illustrated in the present text.


DR. G.G. WILKINS

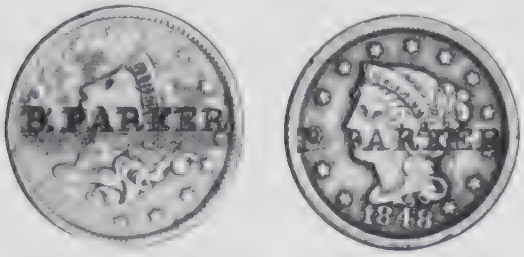
Later, Wilkins created a new DR. G.G. WILKINS in slightly smaller letters and in a shallower curve than the previous, this intended to fit comfortably in front of the face on an Indian Head cent (introduced in 1859). Some of these later stamps are also found in combination with a matching curved counterstamp reading PITTSFIELD, N.H., these being rare.


P.E. BALLOU
PHRENOLOGIST
ONE CENT

1854 copper cent counterstamped by P.E. Ballou, phrenologist. Perry Eugene Ballou was born on January 3, 1850, near Springville, Erie County, New York. About 1865 he moved with his family to Blendon, Michigan.

The art of phrenology—which posited that certain areas of the brain were devoted to specific actions and emotions—was popularized in America by O.S. Fowler, who published widely on the subject. It is likely that Ballou was engaged in the practice of phrenology, involving the analysis of cranial features or "bumps," from the late 1860s through part of the 1870s. Although large copper cents were no longer in circulation by this time, it seems that he stamped a few as souvenirs or business cards.

On May 14, 1879, P.E. Ballou married Olive M. Jackson (life dates: October 8, 1855 to December 5, 1934). The couple had three children. Later in the decade he considered homeopathic medicine, and in 1881 he received a degree from the Chicago branch of Hahnemann Hospital and College, centered in Philadelphia. From the 1880s until his death on June 7, 1913, he lived in various Ohio towns, later taking up farming. (Information courtesy of William Swoger and Dr. Gregory Brunk)



In his 1919-1921 series on counterstamps published in *The Numismatist*, F.G. Duffield commented:

"The frequency with which names of individuals or firms are found stamped on the large copper cents is partly explained in the following letter from Mr. Walter B. Gould, of Bangor, Maine. Mr. Gould recently submitted a number of cents to the writer for examination, most of them having only names stamped on them, which he knew were largely the product of two die and stencil cutters of Bangor many years ago. On request he has furnished the following information concerning them.

"'My first knowledge of Mr. B. Parker, commonly known as Ben Parker, was about 1862, when his place of business was in an old wooden building for brass foundry and metal working at No. 3 Columbia Street, Bangor. My recollection is that most of the business done was making stencils for marking lumber, etc., repairing brass knuckles and ornaments for a harness, locks and lamps. How long he had been at this location before the Civil War I do not know, but until about 1869 I knew the kindly old man, and was sent to him to get stencils made.

"'It was his custom to countermark coins with his name (B. PARKER) for his customers. For other people he would countermark their names or initials when requested, usually on U.S. copper cents. I have seen his name and work on a few other coins.'

"'In the 50s and 60s it seems to have been a common practice to mutilate, mark and hole coins. There was no law against it, the mutilated coins and those partly cut away were equally desirable as a perfect and clumsy coin of the period. At one time I had more than 200 cents marked B. PARKER. I had given one to everybody by the name of Parker that I knew, as well as others, and now have less than a dozen.'"

Gould also wrote about J.W. Strange and Thomas J. Stewart, Bangor residents who also stamped cents.

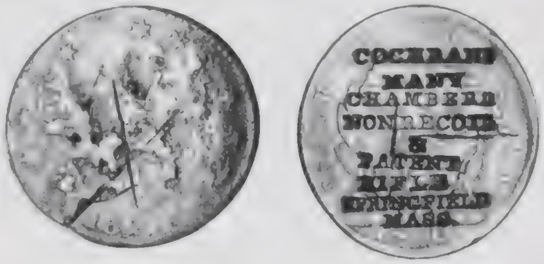
A Business Directory of the Subscribers to the New Map of Maine, undated (c. 1862), has this entry:

"B. Parker, Saw Filer, Agent for the Patent Saw Co., Hammond St." (Bangor).

Today, the B. PARKER stamps are fairly plentiful and are also inexpensive, as the lettering is rather simple and probably not one person in 10 who owns one knows the story of its issuer.

"C.W. KING, *Artist*" proclaims this tiny counterstamp represented in my collection by a handful of different coins, including cents from 1800 to 1851 and an 1853 with-arrows silver quarter dollar.

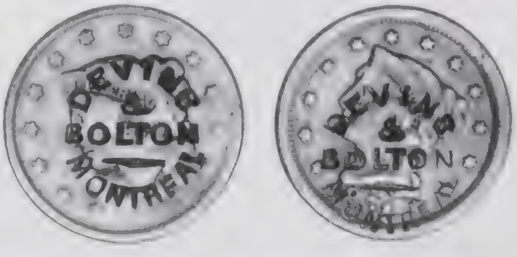
King may have been a daguerreotypist, and perhaps this stamp was regularly used to impress the frames of his pictures, or perhaps to mark the equipment he used. The inscription is so small that it could hardly have been an effective advertisement. As this book goes to press, I have been unable to find mention of King in any reference concerning daguerrians (as they were sometimes called) or, for that matter, regular (portrait, scenic) artists. One of the fascinating things about collecting counterstamps is that there is no lack of unanswered questions, the solutions to which sometimes pop up at the most unexpected times.



Cochran's Many-Chambered Non-Recoil & Patent Rifle sounds like quite a device. Wonder how many were sold and how rare they are today?

The purpose of marking this 1820 cent with such a complex inscription is unknown. As it took several single-line logotype punches, each positioned carefully (more or less), the effort required eliminates the possibility that it was made to be placed into circulation as an advertisement. More likely, it was probably made as a souvenir or pocket piece, rather than specifically for advertising.

John W. Cochran, of New York City, invented the gun, which is believed to have been manufactured by C.B. Allen in Springfield (who was active in the trade circa 1836-1841) and who manufactured the "Monitor" 7-shot revolver, among other items.



During the 1860s large copper cents were no longer seen in circulation in the United States, having been replaced by the copper-nickel cents of smaller diameter. However, in Canada they were plentiful, where they found ready use in commerce—in an era in which relatively few Canadian cents (introduced in 1858) were yet in circulation, and most trade was conducted with United States coins and Canadian tokens.

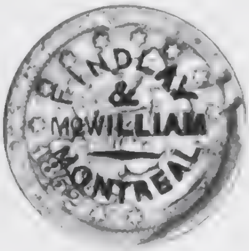
In this milieu, a firm counterstamped untold thousands of American copper large cents—creating the most plentiful of all such issues. Over the years I have collected this counterstamp on most dates of cents from 1816 to 1856 and a few other pieces, including Canadian tokens.

In the *American Journal of Numismatics,* October 1889, the following appeared as part of an article by Dr. Horatio R. Storer, "The Medals, Jetons, and Tokens Illustrative of the Science of Medicine."

"No. 68: DEVINS / & / BOLTON / — / MONTREAL. This I own. Quite a number of Canadian coins, pennies, halfpennies, and Montreal Bank tokens have appeared at American sales with the above counterstamp...

"Mr. R.J. Devins of Montreal, surviving partner of the firm, writes me as follows regarding this counterstamp: 'When I was first in business, owing to the numerous and endless oddities of coins (coppers) then in circulation, I punched everyone I got hold of with the words 'Devins & Bolton, Montreal.' I kept count of the eighteen hundred dollars, but did not give up stamping, and kept on until I had them about most all thus labeled.'"

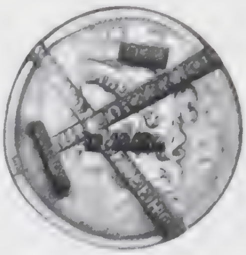
Although this product was not advertised on counterstamps, the firm also sold Devins' Vegetable Worm Pastiles, which were patented July 1, 1867.



1852 cent stamped FINDLAY / & / McWILLIAM / MONTREAL, in a punch identical in style to the plentiful Devins & Bolton advertisement. Possibly, someone associated with Findlay & McWilliam noted the widespread use of Devins & Bolton pieces and determined to issue their own advertisements—having the same engraver (identity unknown) make the punches.

The firm was in the wholesale confectionery business at 519 St. Paul Street in the late 1860s and early 1870s. They must have tired of the effort, for their counterstamp is very rare today. I have seen or owned several hundred Devins & Bolton stamps over the years, but just *three* of Findlay & McWilliam.

This 1838 cent is one of my favorite counterstamps, because it holds several mysteries. The inscriptions, all in hallmarks (rectangular stamps with *raised* interior letters), include the incomplete CHANGE COFFEE HOU, which I attribute to the Exchange Coffee House, as well as BOSTON; O.T.; D.B.B.; and an eagle motif in hallmarks.



It is my theory that the stamp was made for something else, obviously for impressing metal, so perhaps pewter mugs, copper appliances, or other items of this nature were imprinted for ownership and identification purposes. However, how the eagle motif fits in I do not know.

A book published in 1900, *Stage-Coach and Tavern Days*, by Alice Morse Earle, gives a wealth of information concerning this particular establishment:

"The Exchange Coffee-House of Boston was one of the most remarkable of all of these houses. It was a mammoth affair for its day, being seven stories in height. It was completed in 1808, having been nearly three years in building, and having cost half a million dollars. The principal floor was an exchange. It ruined many of the workmen who helped to build it. During the glorious days of stagecoach travel, its successor, built after it was burnt in 1818, had a brilliant career as a staging tavern, for it had over 200 bedrooms, and was in the center of the city. At the Exchange Coffee House was kept a register of marine news, arrivals, departures, etc., and many distinguished naval officers were registered there. At a sumptuous dinner given to President Monroe, who had rooms there, in July 1817, there were present Commodores Bainbridge, Hull, and Perry; ex-president John Adams; Generals Swift, Dearborn, Cobb, and Humphreys; Judges Story, Parker, Davis, Adams, and Jackson; governors Brooks and Phillips, and many other distinguished men. To the Exchange Coffee House resorted the nabobs of Essex County; here those aristocratic eastern towns, Newburyport and Portsmouth, were represented by ship owners and ship builders, merchants of the first class."

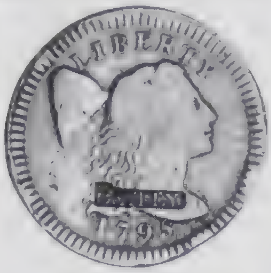
Another book, *The Poets of Maine* (Portland, 1888), relates that Joseph Bartlett, born on June 10, 1752, in Plymouth, Massachusetts, and graduated from Harvard in 1782, became known as an orator and poet. Relevant to the present discussion are these words:

"On the fourth of July, 1823, he delivered an oration in the hall of the Exchange Coffee House, Boston, and recited an ode, mentioned by Mr. Loring in his *Hundred Boston Orators.* The same year he published an edition of poems dedicated to John Quincy Adams."

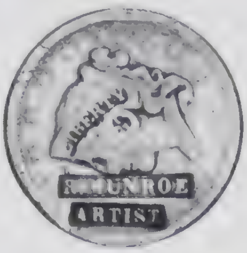
As to the D.B.B. hallmark I know nothing. The O.T. might mean "old tenor," a common term and abbreviation circa 1838 for heavier-weight gold coins minted prior to the Act of June 28, 1834. Old tenor coins were worth more than later ones.

Adding to the charm of this piece is its pedigree: It is from the Frederick C.C. Boyd Collection, later going to John J. Ford, Jr., from whom I purchased it in 1984. The price paid (in case you are interested) was $15. While most numismatists would probably not pay $1.50, let alone $15, for this "damaged" 1838 cent, to me it is wonderful!

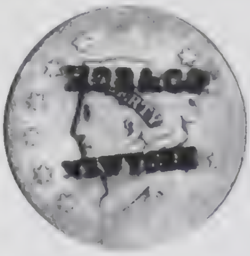
A Gallery of Counterstamped Cents



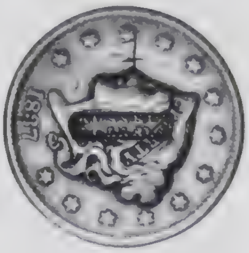
1795 cent hallmarked by Simeon C. Bayley, Philadelphia silversmith. Such artisans often applied their marks to copper cents, leaving a numismatic legacy.



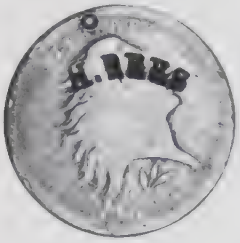
1835 cent hallmarked R. MUNROE and ARTIST by Robert Munroe, a Pittsburgh daguerreotype artist.



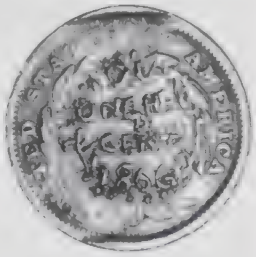
1830 [circa] cent marked by R. Hoe & Co., famous maker of tools and, especially, printing presses, New York City.



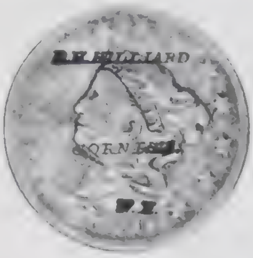
1837 cent hallmarked RUSSELL / & CLARKE by a Woodstock, Vermont, jeweler and silversmith firm whose location I tracked down in an old directory.



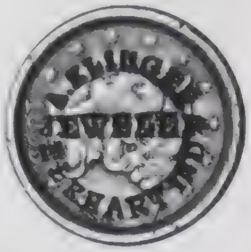
1793 cent stamped H. REES. Henry Rees was a Philadelphia blacksmith who marked many cents to advertise his business.



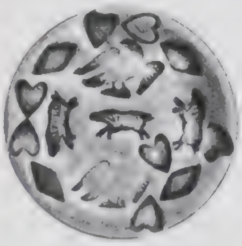
Trial impression for a curious token? I.O.U. / ONE HALF / A / CENT / 1866 in very crude letters, with stars, on the reverse of a copper cent.



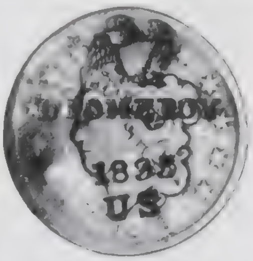
1820 cent stamped D.H. HILLIARD / CORNISH / D.H. Hilliard was a gunsmith of some renown and flourished circa 1842-1877.



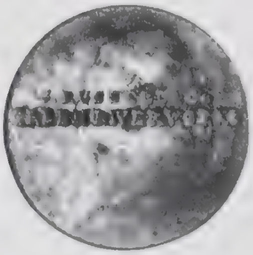
1855 cent stamped A. KLINGER / JEWELER / ELKHART IND. This prolific counterstamper marked many coins to advertise his trade.



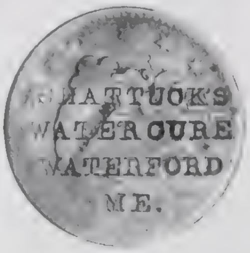
1847 cent with PORK lettered on side of a pig, stamped three times, and other punches, too. Someone was having fun!



1800 [circa] cent stamped with the punches Lemuel Pomeroy, a Pittsfield, Massachusetts gunsmith, used on the lockplates of his rifles.

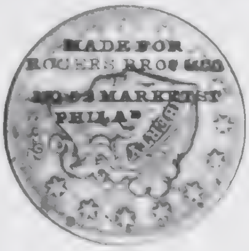


1808 [circa] cent stamped J. RUSSELL & Co / GREEN RIVER WORKS in two-line logotype. The firm, located in Greenfield, MA, made cutlery and edged tools.

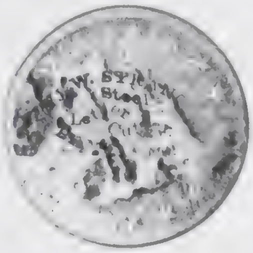


1817 cent stamped DR. / SHATTUCK'S / WATER CURE / WATERFORD / ME. I wrote a book, *The Waterford Water Cure,* about the enterprise.

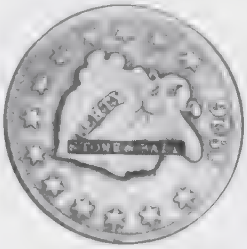
A Gallery of Counterstamped Cents



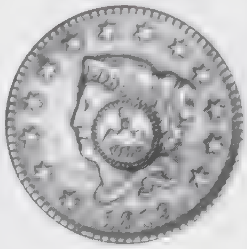
1832 cent stamped MADE FOR / ROGERS BROS. & Co. / No 52 MARKET St. / PHILAd., firearms and hardware merchants.



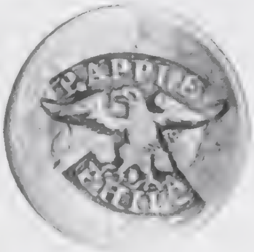
1816 cent stamped J.W. STRANGE/ STEEL / LETTER CUTTER / BANGOR, Me. This stamp was used to sign brass stencils made by Strange.



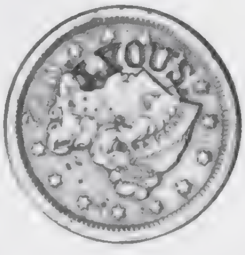
1826 cent hallmarked by STONE & BALL, Syracuse jewelers, who for a time in 1853 and 1854 stamped all of the coins that came their way.



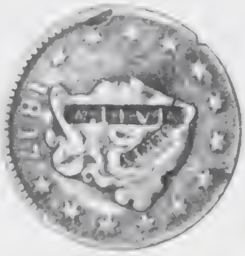
1819 cent counterstamped VALP (for Valparaiso, Chile) in a die with a scene of three mountains. Its pedigree goes back to the Fonrobert Sale in 1878.



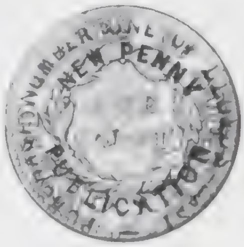
1818 cent stamped by Philip Apple, Philadelphia gunsmith, coppersmith, and maker of metal products. This punch is particularly large.



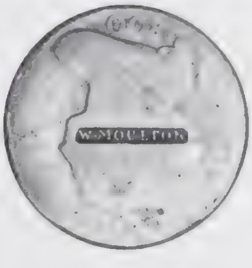
1852 cent stamped J. YOUS, for Joshua Yous, who made Kentucky-type long rifles in Greenfield, Pennsylvania, in the 1850s.



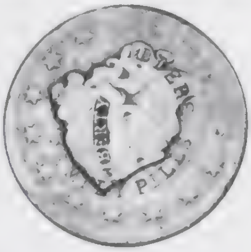
1817 cent hallmarked by William Levis, Philadelphia silversmith. W. LEVIS in rectangular hallmark; lettering crude.



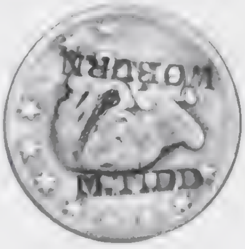
1821 cent stamped PURCHASE NUMBER ONE OF LLOYD'S LAST / NEWPENNY / PUBLICATION, a London periodical. Did this coin travel to England?



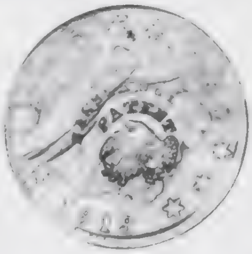
1800/179 cent hallmarked by William Moulton IV, Newburyport, Massachusetts silversmith. I've had this coin in my collection since the 1950s.



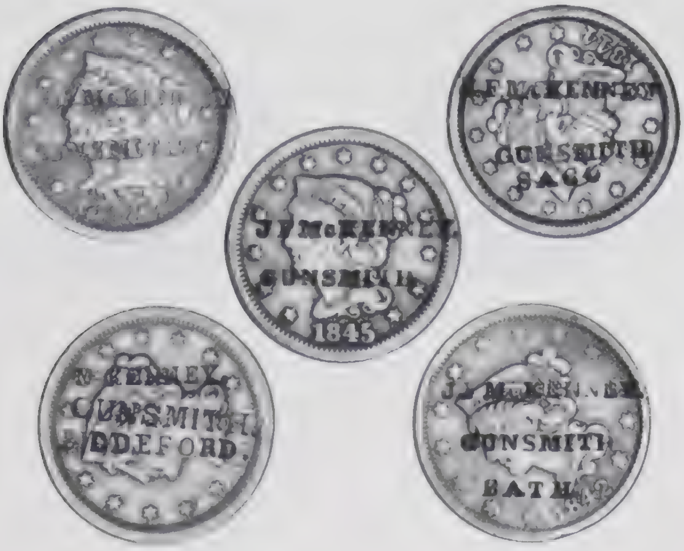
1817 cent stamped USE DR. KIDDERS / FAMILY PILLS in circular logotype on obverse, a patent medicine compounded and sold in Boston.



1816 cent M. TIDD and WOBURN in two logotypes by Marshall Tidd, a Woburn, Massachusetts gunsmith.



1819 cent stamped with NASHUA NHL in curved letters above, PATENT curved below, and eagle motif. Exquisite workmanship. Possibly used on a lock.



Every once in a while I drive along the coast of Southern Maine, and when I do I often think about J.F. McKenney—and think it would be nice to poke around in some historical societies and elsewhere to learn more about him. As it is, I know him from his counterstamps which turn up now and then on coins. Dwight B. Demeritt, Jr., author of *Maine Made Guns and Their Makers,* has corresponded with me concerning McKenney and in his book illustrates one of his counterstamped cents. It is possible that other McKenneys in addition to J.F. used such stamps, for some are simply "McKENNEY" without any first name or initials.

J.F. McKenney and possibly his kinfolk seemed to have used several punches arranged on a coin to read, for example, J.F. McKENNEY / GUNSMITH / SACO. Other stamps were BATH and BIDDEFORD, two other Maine towns. I suspect, but do not know, that these punches were made to be used on his firearms, and not as advertisements. Now and then, perhaps as a whimsy or perhaps to while away an idle few minutes, he would punch some copper cents. Sometimes he (or perhaps one of his relatives in the trade) would stamp McKENNEY, GUNSMITH, without mention of a first name, and the designation for one of the three towns. Other times he or another McKenney would omit GUNSMITH or the town name. I also have seen coins simply impressed SACO or BATH, with nothing else, and I have one copper cent with BIDDEFORD stamped on it so many times that there is no space remaining—although there is no mention of McKinney or his trade.

The latest-dated McKenney coin I have is an 1854 cent, indicating that he was active at this time or later. Most of his cents are dated in the 1840s. His must have been a family enterprise, for various directories of the 1850s and early 1860s include these listings:

"H.H. McKenney, Lib st., Sport'g G'ds, Gunsmithing, &c, done to order." (Biddeford, ME). *A Business Directory of the Subscribers to the New Map of Maine,* undated (c. 1862).

"E.H. McKenney, No. 1 Wash. Bl'k, Lib. st., Gallery of Art, Photog., Ambrotypes, and Melaineotypes." (Biddeford, ME), source as preceding.

"McKenney & Co., Gunsmiths, Biddeford." *The New England Business Directory,* 1852.

OIL
OF
ICE
1848
OIL
OF
ICE

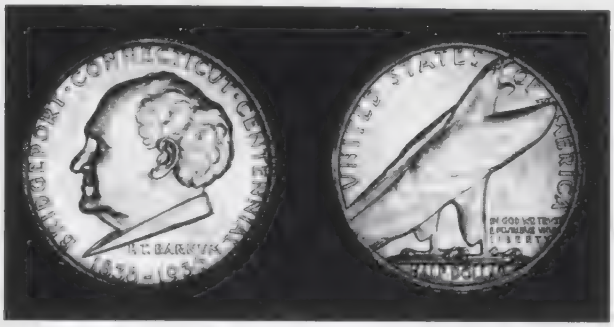
Another favorite counterstamp is OIL / OF / ICE, which I have on a number of different cents, the latest a bronze cent of 1864, but an 1870 two-cent piece should also be mentioned, this being important as it indicates the product was being marketed at or after that date. On many occasions if I have a *large cent* with a stamp, I have collected some other denominations with the identical stamp. In the 1950s I acquired two cents with this stamp, one dated 1848 and the other an 1851.

I have not learned anything about this product, and its counterstamp is somewhat of a mystery. Oil of Ice was being advertised as late as 1870, but at this time large copper cents had not been seen in general circulation for nearly a decade. Were they made as souvenirs, rather than as advertisements?

For the moment the Oil of Ice counterstamp keeps its secret. However, I would not be a bit surprised to encounter an advertisement or, who knows, a bottle of the product itself.

ADVENTURE NO. 40

P.T. BARNUM AND NUMISMATICS



The 1936 Bridgeport (Connecticut) commemorative half dollar featured the portrait of its most famous citizen, Phineas Taylor Barnum, who made the city his home in the nineteenth century.

* * *

P.T. Barnum, Entrepreneur

In 1936 the city of Bridgeport, Connecticut, celebrated its centennial.[1] As the motif for the obverse of a commemorative silver half dollar no better subject could be found than Phineas Taylor Barnum (July 5, 1810 – April 7, 1891), who was remembered as the community's most famous citizen and most generous benefactor. Outside of the city limits, Barnum was known worldwide for his showmanship, ranging from bringing Jenny Lind to America in 1850 to operating a large museum in lower Manhattan to touring with a circus. And, important to the present narrative, he helped promote the numismatic hobby in our country. Along the way, this "adventure" includes some information about B. Max Mehl, the rare coin dealer who mentioned Barnum in a commentary and who was probably the most Barnumesque of all rare coin dealers.

In numismatics, Barnum has played to mixed reviews. The late Walter Breen, one of America's most acclaimed numismatic researchers in the second half of the twentieth century, was fond of referring to P.T. Barnum as "the patron saint of coin collectors" with tacit reference to the saying, "There's a sucker born every minute," although it is not at all certain that Barnum ever uttered these words.

In fact, Barnum was a very community-minded, benevolent individual who made great contributions to the citizenry and indeed to America as a whole. Who will deny that Barnum's circus ("The Greatest Show on Earth"), his American Museum, or his other activities did not contribute to the enjoyment of average Americans during the middle part of the nineteenth century, perhaps as Walt Disney did to a later generation in the next century? "Every crowd has a silver lining," Barnum once said. In a classic *quid pro quo* situation, Barnum profited from the public, but the public also benefited from Barnum.[2]

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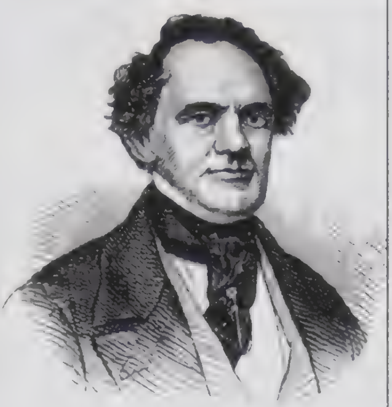
[1] A small part of the following is adapted from the author's "Coins and Collectors" column in *The Numismatist*, 1997.

[2] A.H. Saxon, *Selected Letters of P.T. Barnum*, New York City: Columbia University Press, 1983, p. xvi, notes in part: "From 1846…until [his death in] 1891, his life was increasingly centered on the city of Bridgeport. Barnum's energy and influence there extended to a broad

I read Barnum's autobiography, *Struggles and Triumphs,* years ago and ever since then have had an appreciation for America's best-known showman. The book reveals that Barnum was a hard-working, dedicated, self-made individual with an untamable entrepreneurial spirit. Most (but not all) of his later biographers felt likewise.



Phineas Taylor Barnum, leading citizen of Bridgeport and the originator of "The Greatest Show on Earth." His American Museum was one of New York City's most prominent attractions in the mid-nineteenth century. (*Our First Century, Great and Memorable Events*)

Not only was Barnum a born showman—the greatest ever, in the estimation of many historians—but, unlike most of his contemporaries in the exhibition business, he was a highly gifted writer.[1] Having lost his father when he was only 15, after which he was the primary support for his mother and five siblings, he learned to work hard and turn a profit, never taking success for granted.[2]

Many of the things he did were not so much misrepresentation as they were showmanship or whimsy; however, a line between the two is hard to draw. For example, when he found that his American Museum in New York City was becoming overly crowded by people who stayed longer than they should have, he erected a sign marked "To the Egress," egress meaning exit, not a rare bird from Tasmania or some other far-off place, although most of his patrons did not know that. Following the sign in the hope of locating an interesting exhibit, visitors found themselves out on the street! To see the rest of the exhibits, they had to re-enter by the front door and pay the required admission fee.

In time, as his show career blossomed, P.T. Barnum excited America and Europe with many attractions including Joice Heth (a black lady, age advertised as 161 years, who claimed to have cared for George Washington in his infancy; a hoax), the Feejee Mermaid (constructed of animal parts, another hoax), Jumbo (the huge and very real elephant whose name survives today as an adjective denoting large size), the Wooly Horse (said to have been found by Fremont during his exploration of the West), General Tom Thumb, the pageant of Lalla Rookh, Jenny Lind (the "Swedish Nightingale," who was a relatively unknown singer brought to America by Barnum and launched on this side of the Atlantic with an unprecedented publicity campaign; overnight she became famous), and many others.

From the time he acquired it on December 27, 1841, until it burned for the second time on March 2, 1868, his American Museum was a "must see" for visitors to New York City.[3] Visiting foreign dignitaries, business moguls, and, especially, everyday citizens thronged the galleries and viewed the exhibits. Just about every popular newspaper of the day included information on the multiple attractions and events within its walls. Of the American Museum more will be related.

In a letter penned on January 27, 1860, to R. Griffin & Co., a British publisher, Barnum included this capsule philosophy:[4]

> As a general thing I have not "*duped* the world," nor attempted to do so; but while I do not attempt to justify all I have done, I do know that I have generally given the people the *worth of their money twice told.*
>
> The Mermaid, Wooly Horse, Ploughing Elephants, &c., were merely used by me as skyrockets or advertisements, to attract attention and give notoriety to the *Museum* and such other really valuable attractions as I provided for the public.
>
> I believe hugely in advertising and blowing my own trumpet, beating the gongs, drums, &c., to attract attention to a *show,* but I never believe that any amount of advertising or energy would make a *spurious* article permanently successful.
>
> No man really believes less in *shows* than myself. I should dislike to be thought so poor a student of human nature as to believe that money can be made from

---

spectrum of public improvements...." Among other accomplishments he served as mayor of the city for one term and as representative of his district for four terms in the State Legislature, he opposed railroad monopoly interests, he championed the right of black residents to vote, he developed East Bridgeport and in order to get the project started sold much land at his cost, he established Seaside Park for the community, etc.

[1] He seems to have cut his teeth, writing-wise, early in his career when he published the *Herald of Freedom,* in Danbury, Connecticut; his facts seem to have been questioned in at least three major instances, as evidenced by suits of libel.

[2] Although Barnum was a great success as a showman, he cannot be said to have had a happy married life. In 1829, at age 19, he married Charity Hallett, of Bethel, Connecticut, age 21, who bore him four daughters, one of whom died as a child, and another of whom was disinherited. After Charity died in 1873, in secrecy he married Nancy Fish, with whom he apparently had been consorting for some time.

[3] The first fire, July 13, 1865, destroyed the traditional facility. A new museum was constructed, and opened on September 6 of the same year.

[4] Quoted by A.H. Saxon, *Selected Letter of P.T. Barnum,* p. 103. Letter held by the British Museum, London.

> the public without giving a full *equivalent* therefor. I don't believe in "duping the public," but I believe in first *attracting* and then pleasing them.

In 1963 in his excellent book, *United States Commemorative Coins*, Arlie Slabaugh printed a favorable commentary about Bridgeport's most famous personage, concluding thus: "Barnum is buried in Bridgeport.... In 1883 the Barnum Museum of Natural History was established at Tufts College [Medford, Massachusetts] in his honor; there are also statues, but his greatest monument is the circus. Don't you see that sawdust ring, hear the calliope?"

Barnum's career had many setbacks, the "struggles" mentioned in the title of his life story. He co-signed a note for the Jerome Clock Company, an enterprise that became defunct, leaving him with a large obligation, although he had reaped no benefits. In 1855 he sold or transferred most of the American Museum's collections to his friends John Greenwood, Jr., and Henry D. Butler, to keep them out of creditors' hands and to permit the Museum to remain open, the lease for which was in his wife's name. While certain of these actions were certainly evasive and self-protective, Barnum eventually settled to the satisfaction of most of his creditors—a tribute to his integrity. On March 24, 1860, after having regained his financial strength through diligent effort, including a traveling tour featuring midget General Tom Thumb, he repurchased his exhibits from Greenwood and Butler, who, in effect, had been holding them in trust, hoping for his repatriation.

Of course, it is not particularly necessary that one should like—or dislike—Barnum. Within the wide spectrum of numismatics, individuals of just about every stripe and inclination are pictured on coins.

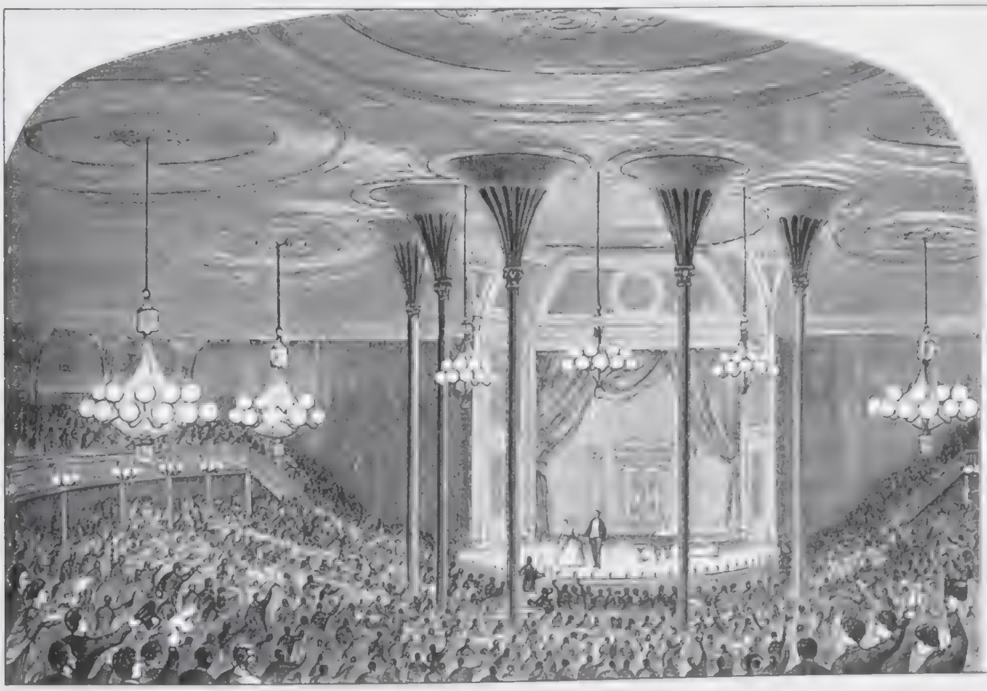
Now, the background of Barnum's American Museum, scenes of the years before 1841:

The Tammany Museum

In New York City, Gardiner Baker (?-1798), proprietor of the Tammany Museum, had dozens of coins on display, but was the victim of two thefts. The author has encountered no coins today that can be specifically traced to this pioneering exhibit (certain items of which later passed to P.T. Barnum), nor has an early description of the coins been located.

Historian Walter Barrett described the museum:[1]

> The American Museum [was] started under the patronage of the Tammany Society. Gardiner Baker was keeper of it. The trustees were appointed by Tammany Hall. It afterwards became Gardner's [*sic*] Museum. Baker had a museum of wax work in 1793, that he kept in the upper part of the Exchange in Broad Street. Among his curiosities were transparent paintings. A patent steam duck, a male and female outang [orangutan], twenty wax figures as large as life, and two mandarins from the East Indies.
>
> The museum room was elegantly painted, exhibiting many of the most curious and singular articles,



Jenny Lind at Castle Garden, New York City, September 11, 1850, through arrangements made by impresario P.T. Barnum. Miss Lind subsequently toured the East and appeared, sometimes on multiple visits, in Boston, Providence, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Charleston, Havana (Cuba), New Orleans, Natchez, Memphis, St. Louis, Nashville, Louisville, Madison (Indiana), Cincinnati, Wheeling, and Pittsburgh. Her highest grossing single concert was in New York City, where $17,864.05 was received; her lowest was $2,837.92 in Havana. She performed in 95 concerts for profit, totaling $712,161.34, and a number of others to benefit people and causes. (*Our First Century, Great and Memorable Events*)

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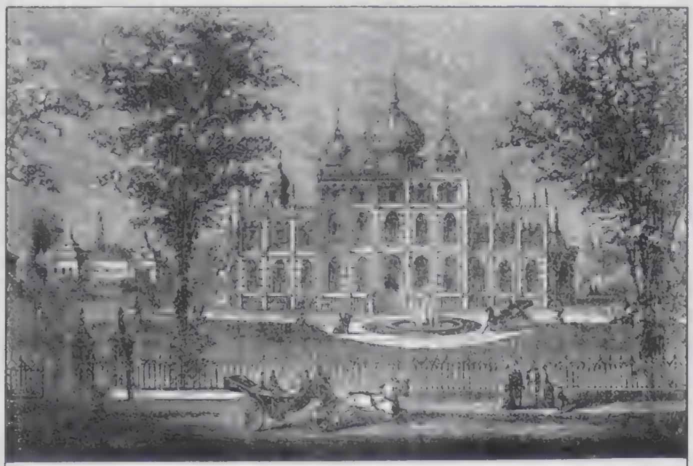
[1] Walter Barrett, *The Old Merchants of New York City*, Vol. V., 1885, pp. 229-232, gives many details of the Tammany Museum. The Tammany Society was also called the Columbian Order. In 1808, the museum was called Baker's American Museum. After he sold it to Dr. Scudder, it was moved to the third story of the old City Hall (which later became a subject in the Historical Tokens series issued by Augustus B. Sage in 1859).



Iranistan, the palatial Bridgeport home of P.T. Barnum. In his words: "In visiting Brighton, in England, I had been greatly pleased with the Pavilion erected by George IV. It was the only specimen of Oriental architecture in England, and the style had not been introduced in America. I concluded to adopt it, and engaged a London architect to furnish me a set of drawings.... The building progressed slowly, but surely and substantially. Elegant and appropriate furniture was made expressly for every room in the house....

"The whole was built and established literally 'regardless of expense,' for I had no desire even to ascertain the entire cost.... My family moved into the premises, and on the 14th of November, 1848, nearly one thousand invited guests, including the poor and the rich, helped us in the old-fashioned custom of 'house warming.'...

"I was staying at the Astor House, in New York, when, on the morning of December 18, 1857, I received a telegram from my brother, Philo F. Barnum, dated at Bridgeport and informing me that Iranistan was burned to the ground that morning.... My beautiful Iranistan was gone! This was not only a serious loss to my estate, but it was generally regarded as a public calamity. It was the only building in its particular style, of any pretension, in America, and many persons visited Bridgeport every year expressly to see Iranistan." (*Struggles and Triumphs* by P.T. Barnum)

> birds and plants in their proper colors. The arch had a fine effect, appeared like the sky, with clouds interspersed, and a thunderstorm raging. It was open three nights in the week, from candle light until nine o'clock. Tickets, two shillings. Children, one shilling.
>
> In addition he had 600 birds and 2,000 insects, a ship of fourteen guns, completely rigged, and made entirely of glass; a musical clock which played five different instruments, the harpsichord, piano-forte, two flutes, and an organ, and cost $800. The last was in an additional Museum. Admittance into it was three shillings, and into both Museums four shillings.
>
> This Tammany Museum was started by the Tammany Society in June 1790. It tried to collect together everything relating to the history of this country, and especially all literary publications concerning the civil, political, or religious affairs of America, whether ancient or modern, whether published in this or any other country, American publications of a literary nature, gazettes, magazines, or other periodical pieces, and likewise every other production of nature or art. John Pintard was its secretary, and doubtless originated the idea.[1] The Tammany Society evidently became disgusted with the Museum business, for although the Corporation had generously granted the use of the Exchange in Broad Street for the Museum, yet I find that on June 25th, 1795, the Society passed a resolution:
>
> "That Gardiner Baker has great merit, in his extraordinary exertions for the promotion and extension of his Museum. He appears neither to have spared labor or expense in his endeavors to accomplish the original object of the founders of this institution, and gratifying the curious. That the members of his Society relinquish and assign all their right in the Museum to Gardiner Baker, upon the following conditions: That the same shall forever hereafter continue to be known by the name of the Tammany Museum, in honor of the original founders and patrons; that Gardiner Baker shall continue the Museum one and indivisible, which shall be kept together in some convenient place within the city of New York, and that each member of the Tammany Society shall, with their wives and children, forever hereafter have free access to the said museum...."
>
> Gardiner Baker kept it up for years. He then sold out to Scudder, who kept it in the old City Hall, free of expense. Then it was sold to Barnum, who calls it by the old name of American Museum, but not as he should do, "The Tammany Museum," as he is obliged to do by the terms of sale....[2]

If a catalogue of the Baker and Scudder coin-related exhibits was ever prepared, no copy has been reported in numismatic literature to my knowledge.

The scene changes to 1827. James Hardie, in *The Description of the City of New York*, described three places of wonder and curiosity that were open to visitors at that time, although the time of Barnum's ownership was still 14 years in the future:

> **AMERICAN MUSEUM**
>
> **In New-York**
>
> This Museum which was founded in 1810, by the late John Scudder, is daily open for the reception of

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[1] Pintard is numismatically noticed in other connections, including through a medal by Frederick B. Smith (of Smith & Hartmann and other affiliations), bearing his portrait on the obverse, with two different styles of reverse, one of which depicts the home of the New-York Historical Society and the other of which gives his life dates. Barrett, in Vol. II of his work, pp. 224-225, stated that a "large square block of crystal" was loaned by Pintard to Dr. Scudder, who then sold it to P.T. Barnum, who took it to his elegant mansion, Iranistan, in Bridgeport, Connecticut. • Also see Dr. Joel J. Orosz, "The Great Coin Heist of 1796," *The Numismatist*, February 1999.

[2] Barrett went on to suggest that the Tammany Society should take back the exhibits from Barnum if he did not change the museum's name.

company. In the evening the whole five halls are brilliantly lighted with gas light. Each hall is 100 feet in length, and the whole is furnished with the greatest and most valuable collection in America.

Late Additions.—The Cosmorama Saloon, containing the great optical deception of 47 glasses, and producing a display of exquisite talent; the Serpent Boa, (from South America,), measuring 16 feet in length, the largest and most perfect specimen ever exhibited in America: together with an interesting variety of other rare and curious subjects.

Admittance 25 cents, Children half price. Yearly tickets for a family $10, single ticket $5.

PEALE'S MUSEUM

Broadway, Opposite the Park

This Institution, which is open all day as well as the evening, contains a valuable collection of Paintings by eminent artists, of all ages: one hundred and fifty Portraits of Revolutionary and other distinguished characters, known by the name of the Delaphaine Gallery of American Worthies[1]; besides a very rare and extensive collection of Natural History in all branches, as well as miscellaneous curiosities from all parts of the world; a set of Cosmorama Views, &c.

The terrace of this establishment affords a most delightful prospect of the city and surrounding country.

Admittance at all times 25 cents, children half price. Profiles cut and framed as usual.

CHATHAM MUSEUM

In the New-York Speculatum, Chatham Street

This Museum was lately established by the son of the late John Scudder, a young gentleman who inherits no small portion of that taste, and enthusiasm, which so eminently characterized his parent.

This Museum is open every day, and the three Halls are brilliantly lit with gas in the evening. The Chatham Museum contains a collection of natural and artificial Curiosities, of every description; a large and extensive collection of Wax Figures; a Grand Cosmorama of 48 glasses; a Mechanical Panorama; a Gallery of Paintings, with an endless grove, and an infinite variety of entertaining and pleasing subjects.

Some favorite airs are given nightly on the Finger Organ and Piano. Visitors weighed, measured, and electrified.

Admittance 25 cents, children half price.

Items from Peale's Museum and from the American Museum went to Barnum. What happened to the Chatham Museum, and what the New York Speculatum was, I haven't a clue.

From such beginnings Barnum was to go on to become known as America's greatest showman. His career was delineated in his own 1855 book, *The Life and Struggles of P.T. Barnum, Written by Himself.* He delighted in the recital of stories of the deceptions or *humbugs*, as he and others called them, all created for the puzzlement and amusement of the public coincident with his own profit, some of them forming the subject of his popular lecture, "The Philosophy of Humbug." However, many of his critics saw it differently, and considered him to be a bragging sinner, or worse. Later, the book was redone and published under the title of *Struggles and Triumphs* and was sold in many editions over a long period of years.

Humbugs

Although many Barnum humbugs could be recited, this one is a typical example. In England, on August 18, 1846, he wrote to his friend and confidant, Moses Kimball, a fellow museum proprietor, stating that a speaking automaton he had brought from New York to London "is now clearing $300 per week," and that another great exhibit item was in the offing:[2]

> The *animal* that I spoke to you and Hale about comes out at Egyptian Hall, London, next Monday, and I half fear that it will not only be exposed, but that I shall be *found out* in the matter. However, I go it, live or die.
>
> The thing is not to be called *anything* by the exhibitor. We know not and therefor do not assert whether it is human or animal. We leave that all to the sagacious public to decide. The bills and advertisements will be headed as follows:
>
> WHAT IS IT?
>
> Now exhibiting at Egyptian Hall, &c., &c.
>
> **Found in the forests of California, &c., &c.**

It seems that Barnum was a born letter writer, and much of his correspondence still exists, often laced with information about profits, impending exhibits, and other commercial matters. He also became embroiled in a number of feuds. In the 1840s and 1850s James Gordon Bennett seemed to delight in repeatedly writing of Barnum's humbugs—as hoaxes and frauds—including Joice Heth and the Feejee Mermaid. While Barnum himself was proud of these and other deceptions, he did not like Bennett's slant on the matter. In return, Barnum wrote in correspondence, including for a rival paper, the *New-York Sun*, that Bennett was a phony and his wife was a boorish social pretender. Acclaim and publicity, no matter how acquired, were Barnum's sustenance, but the publicity had to be just right—to entice the public, not to drive them away.

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[1] Thomas Jefferson called such portraits (including several by the Peale family) in his own reception room, his "gallery of worthies."

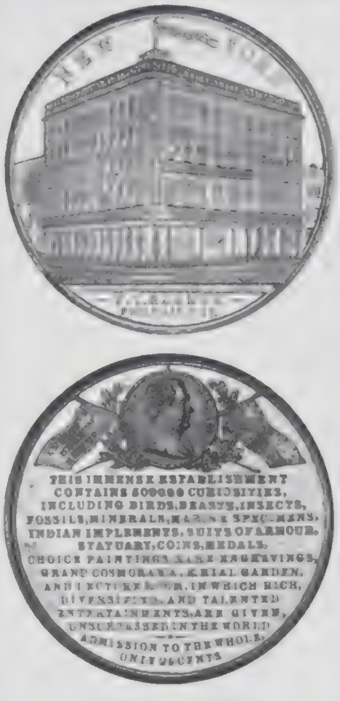
[2] Cited from A.H. Saxon, *Selected Letters of P.T. Barnum*, pp. 35-36. Letter in the collection of the New York Public Library.

Barnum's autobiography, telling of escapades, humbugs, and, as the title stated, *Struggles and Triumphs*, was the springboard for many studies of his life made by others, most of which are highly entertaining to read today.[1]

The 1936 Bridgeport Half Dollar

Beginning in the autumn of 1935, "commemorative coin fever" swept America. Newly-issued varieties such as the 1935 Hudson, 1935 Old Spanish Trail, and an especially rare pair of 1935-dated Boone half dollars with "D" and "S" mintmarks, and with the added date "1934" on the reverse, captured the fancy of numismatists and speculators alike. Prices doubled and tripled, and excitement prevailed.

As might be expected, this was the catalyst for many new proposals for the issuance of commemorative halves depicting events from well-known to obscure. Somewhere in between was a half dollar related to P.T. Barnum.


NEW YORK
THIS IMMENSE ESTABLISHMENT
CONTAINS 500000 CURIOSITIES,
INCLUDING BIRDS, BEASTS, INSECTS,
FOSSILS, MINERALS, MARINE SPECIMENS,
INDIAN IMPLEMENTS, SUITS OF ARMOUR,
STATUARY, COINS, MEDALS,
CHOICE PAINTINGS RARE ENGRAVINGS,
GRAND COSMORAMA, AERIAL GARDEN,
AND LECTURE ROOM, IN WHICH RICH,
DIVERSIFIED, AND TALENTED
ENTERTAINMENTS ARE GIVEN,
UNSURPASSED IN THE WORLD
ADMISSION TO THE WHOLE,
ONLY 25 CENTS

Struck by Allen & Moore of Birmingham, England, this attractive medal features a view of the American Museum on the obverse and a listing of the main attractions (500,000 curiosities, etc.) on the reverse, including "coins, medals."

Legislation approved by Congress on May 15, 1936, specified that no fewer than 25,000 silver Bridgeport half dollars of a single design be struck at a single mint. The commemorative boom was at its height, and anticipation ran high that the issue would be a sellout. The bill further provided that "the coins herein authorized shall bear the date 1936, irrespective of the year in which they are minted or issued," placing no expiration time on minting nor limit to the quantities that could be ordered. Accordingly, a strict reading of the legislation suggests that Bridgeport had the authority to order as many additional half dollars as it wanted to and could have produced an *unlimited number* of 1936-dated coins during the next several years until the Act of August 5, 1939, prohibited the further issuance of any commemoratives authorized prior to March 1, 1939—an interesting bit of numismatic trivia.

In due course, models illustrating the coin's design were prepared by sculptor Henry G. Kreis (who had created the 1935 Connecticut Tercentenary commemorative half dollar). Depicted on the obverse was Barnum, and on the reverse a modernistic eagle was featured, the latter somewhat similar to the eagle on Kreis' 1935 Tercentenary coin. In due course, some 25,015 sparkling silver halves were struck at the Philadelphia Mint, representing 25,000 intended for public sale and 15 for testing by the Assay Commission.[2]

The coins were run through a counting machine and put up in white cloth bags of 1,000 pieces and shipped to the attention of Bridgeport Centennial, Inc., whose offices were in the Stratfield Hotel. Offered at $2 per coin with a limit of five per buyer, the commemoratives could be ordered through the First National Bank & Trust Co. and other financial institutions in the city. The coins were packaged in blue cardboard boxes with gold trim.

Distribution began about September 1st, too late to sell the coins in many local centennial celebrations, which had been going on since June 4th (and would end on October 3). However, the main market was coin collectors and investors, not the citizens of Bridgeport. The great commemorative boom of 1936 was just past its peak, but there was still enough momentum and demand that many thousands of coins found eager buyers. Although precise information is lacking, it seems likely that about 20,000 were sold, leaving about 5,000 remainders.

Bridgeport Halves in Later Years

Sales of the leftover Bridgeport commemorative half dollars continued after the centennial year, but thousands were still on hand. In February 1938, it was announced in *The Numismatist* that the Community Chest and Council, Inc. of Bridgeport, had acquired the stock and was going to offer them for sale. Apparently, buyers were few. A quantity estimated to be on the order of several thousand pieces remained unsold and was eventually wholesaled for a small premium above face value through dealers.

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[1] Some of Barnum's thoughts are also highly instructive from a business viewpoint. He often felt that in a given city, the more public attractions, the better—as crowds would come to see the others, enjoy themselves, and then see what Barnum had to offer, all attractions combining to enhance the public interest in such things. He stated that in the opening year of the Crystal Palace, 1853, when the Exhibition of the Industry of All Nations was in place, the business at his competing American Museum was double what it would have been if the Crystal Palace had not existed. After an initial rush of enthusiasm, receipts of the Crystal Palace diminished, and Barnum was prevailed upon to take charge, but not even his talents resulted it\n a profit being made.

[2] The Assay Commission met in Philadelphia, February 10, 1937, and reviewed the silver coinage of 1936. Unlike certain earlier (and later) years, it was not the practice in the late 1930s to invite numismatists to attend.

Years later, Toivo Johnson, a dealer in commemoratives who was a prolific advertiser in the *Numismatic Scrapbook* and who did business by mail from East Holden, Maine, acquired a large quantity. Johnson had these on hand for a long time and in the 1950s and 1960s was a ready wholesale source for anyone wanting them in quantity. Meanwhile, the market value of these and other commemoratives inched upward. Finally, in 1972 he sold about 1,400 pieces to First Coinvestors, Inc., of New York. So far as I know, that ended the old-time holdings. Today the Bridgeport commemorative half dollars are widely dispersed.

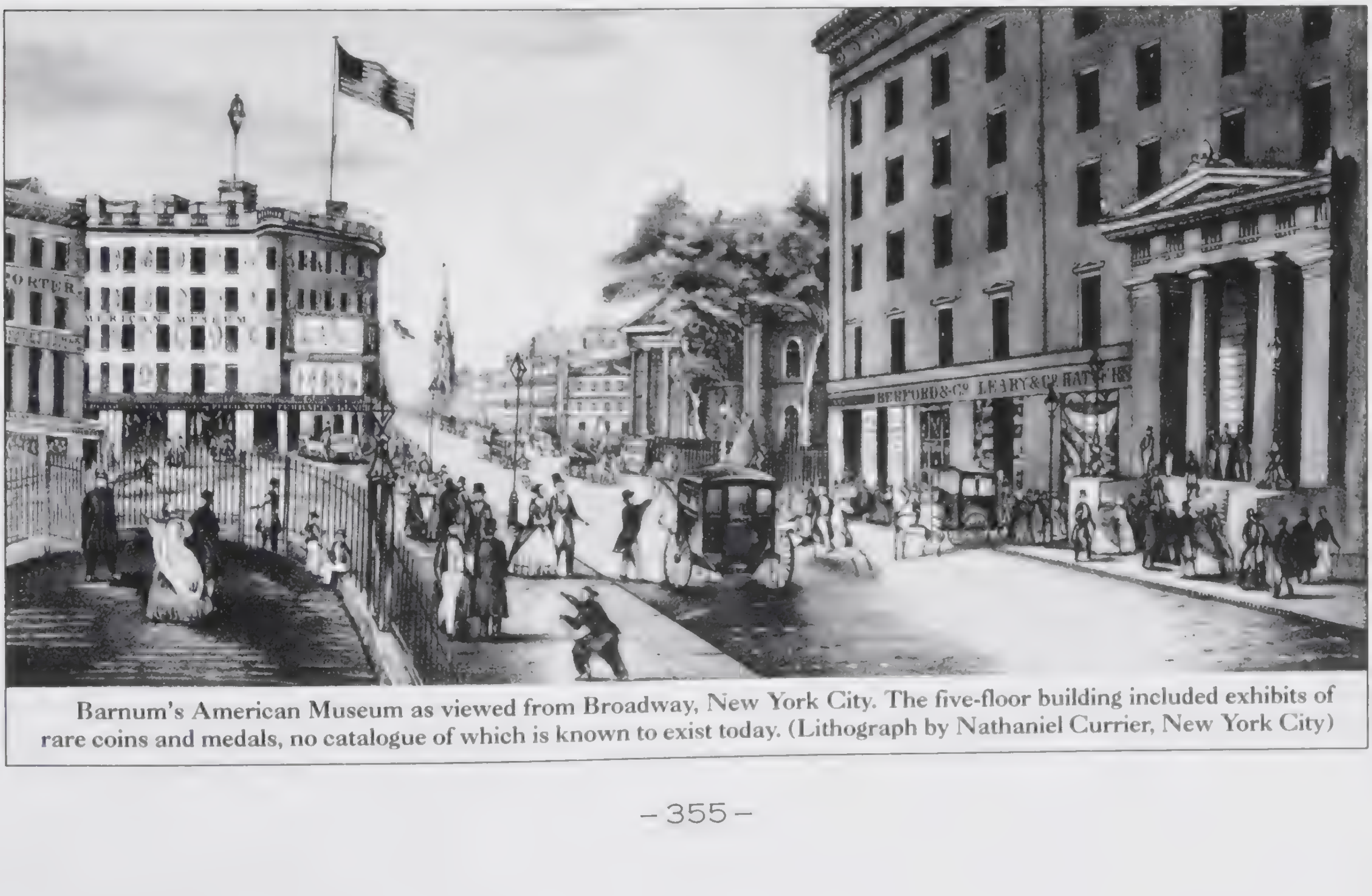
B. Max Mehl's Review

In 1937, a year after the Barnum-Bridgeport half dollars reached the market, Fort Worth, Texas, dealer (and no mean showman himself) B. Max Mehl published a modest little booklet titled *The Commemorative Coins of the United States*. At the time just about everybody had an opinion on commemoratives, their designs, and the recent gyrations of the market. Mehl, America's most famous professional numismatist at the time, was moved to say this about the Bridgeport coin:

> As no doubt the first thought in the collector's mind is just why Mr. Barnum's portrait should be upon the coins, here is the reason given by the Committee:
>
> "In addition to the worldwide fame of P.T. Barnum as a showman, we look upon him with a great deal of respect as a fine citizen and philanthropist of our city. He served as our mayor in the year of 1875. In 1851 he purchased a tract of land in East Bridgeport, laid out streets and lined them with trees. He also reserved a grove of eight acres, which is now known as Washington Park. This was the beginning of an industrial development in our city which has since grown to great proportions."
>
> Considering the status of the commemorative coins we think that Barnum's likeness, in view of his famous remark, is certainly most appropriate. As regards the reverse, it is best described by a comment made by one of the suckers, pardon me, I mean purchasers, as published in a recent issue of a publication:
>
> "The eagle (?) on the new Bridgeport half dollar is the biggest joke as a specimen of our noble bird that ever appeared on a coin. Not a feather appears on its tin-roof surface, and several beholders said it resembled an airplane. Turn it around and you have a fine shark with two dorsal fins, an open mouth and a tongue. The shark appears to be laughing. I wonder at whom? And how apropos that P.T. Barnum's portrait adorns the other side. He was right in his famous remarks years ago."

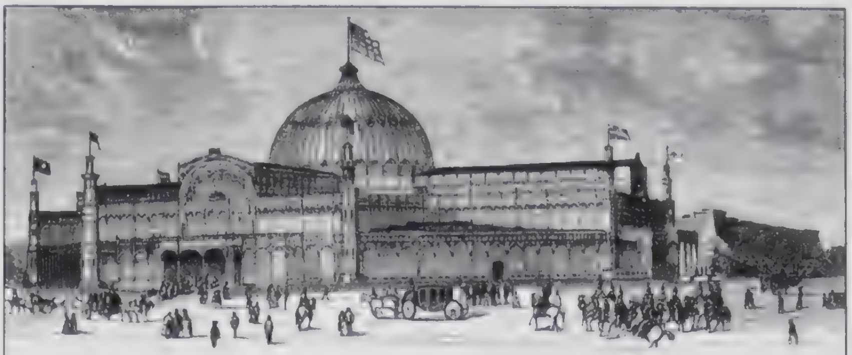
It seems that Barnum, the purveyor and exhibitor of humbugs, was the image known to Mehl (and probably to most Americans of the twentieth century), while the commemorative committee took a more charitable view.

By the way, Mehl's favorite commemorative half dollar design was the 1925-S California Diamond Ju-



Barnum's American Museum as viewed from Broadway, New York City. The five-floor building included exhibits of rare coins and medals, no catalogue of which is known to exist today. (Lithograph by Nathaniel Currier, New York City) bilee, which was accorded unstinting praise in a homey commentary:

> This is my favorite coin because San Francisco is my favorite city (not that you give a damn). This beautiful coin was struck to commemorate the 75th anniversary of California being admitted into the Union (this coin should have been struck in gold). Obverse is a very fine piece of art work showing a miner washing gold.
>
> The reverse is a polar bear [*sic*], the emblem of California (why, I don't know). I have traveled and toured California from one end to the other and have never yet seen a bear.



The magnificent Crystal Palace in New York City, 1853. Barnum was one of the promoters of this structure (although not an original stockholder), which opened to showcase the natural, artistic, and manufactured products of various nations. The building burned on October 5, 1858. (*Our First Century, Great and Memorable Events*)

Barnum's Museum

Goodbye to the California bear, and back to the subject at hand, this being P.T. Barnum:

Although Barnum and the 1936 Bridgeport half dollar are well known, more obscure is the showman's direct connection with numismatics nearly 150 years ago. For many years his American Museum, also called Barnum's Museum, had a large display of coins. A 153-page catalogue of the museum, published in 1853, apparently described or mentioned the coin exhibit,[1] but I have never seen a copy.

Years later in 1867, pioneer American rare coin dealer Augustus B. Sage recalled:[2]

> About seven years ago the old Museum (Barnum's) contained a very fair cabinet; a miscellaneous collection it is true, but scattered here and there in the cases were some very rare specimens of our earlier coinage.
>
> At the time of the "clock excitement," I believe, the rarer specimens were purchased at "one dollar each all round" by a prominent collector of New Jersey.[3] There can be no question, I take it, that the exhibition of the cases of coins in Barnum's at the time I have referred to, was an incentive for a great number of present collectors to turn their attention to the subject; and the public exhibition of such frames in all museums tends greatly to stimulate the study.[4]

In all eras, museum exhibits have helped advance the cause of numismatics. It is ironic that today there are fewer museum exhibits of coins than there were in the nineteenth century! We need a new P.T. Barnum!

Although Barnum was never known personally as a numismatist, it is evident that his contributions were important to the hobby. In addition to the outreach of his museum, several varieties of tokens and medals were issued by him and others or featured his attractions (such as Jenny Lind, Tom Thumb, and the Museum). Barnum also publicized the great Crystal Palace in New York City in 1853, it being the subject of nearly a dozen different tokens and medals, including from dies by Charles Cushing Wright and Anthony Paquet. Perhaps it is quite fitting, numismatically, that Barnum was pictured on the 1936 commemorative half dollar. In actuality, if you were to survey *all* commemorative half dollars from 1936 back to the beginning of the series in 1892, few other people depicted on the coins would have any personal claim to *numismatic* posterity other than via their coin appearance.

This rings down the curtain on P.T. Barnum and his numismatic connections, along with some byways and diversions, although, of course, more could be said. The story of Jenny Lind alone could fill a book—illustrated by the many tokens and medals with her portrait.

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[1] Emmanuel J. Attinelli, *Numisgraphics*, 1876, p. 82; later editions were also published.

[2] *American Journal of Numismatics*, May 1867.

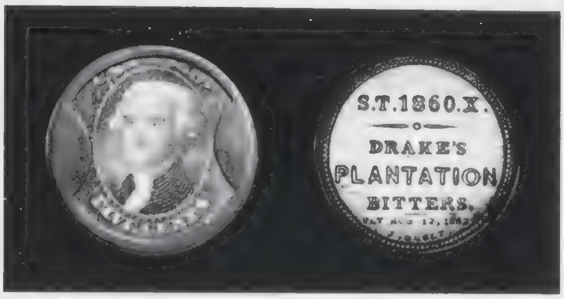
[3] The "clock excitement" referred to Barnum's struggle with the Jerome Clock Co. affairs. Dr. Joel J. Orosz (communication, 2001) suggests that the "prominent New Jersey collector" may have been Benjamin Haines. • Haines is familiar to students of nineteenth-century American numismatics through his association with several auction sales, including consignments sold on November 21-22, 1860, through Bangs, Merwin & Co., New York, in a catalogue which Haines prepared himself; another self-catalogued sale in the same venue, January 19-23, 1863; a modest consignment of 734 lots auctioned by Cooley & Co., New York, on November 13, 1865; a sale catalogued by the highly regarded dealer William Harvey Strobridge and sold at George A. Leavitt & Co. New York, April 11-12, 1872 (an account of this event was published in *Mason's Coin Collectors' Magazine*, March-April 1872); and a large sale billed as Haines' entire collection of rare and valuable minerals, autographs, coins, books, paper money, old documents, newspapers, almanacs, etc., also corals, fossils, birds, etc., catalogued by Strobridge and sold in Leavitt's sale room. The listing of items *other than coins* in Haines' collection is reflective of a study and acquisition philosophy which has been followed by many highly successful, enthusiastic, and *long enduring* participants in the numismatic hobby over the years. Familiarity with related historical items and fields often sharply enhances the enjoyment of numismatics.

[4] This sale of the coins to a New Jersey collector circa 1860 was fortuitous, for the American Museum was gutted by fire on July 13, 1865. The "clock excitement" took place in 1856 (not circa 1860).

ADVENTURE NO. 41

DRAKE'S PLANTATION BITTERS

S. T. 1860.X



An encased postage stamp enclosing a one-cent stamp behind mica, in a brass frame, with an advertisement for Drake's Plantation Bitters on the reverse side. Guesses as to the meaning of S.T.1860.X furnished a lively topic for discussion.

The Summer of 1862

Without a doubt the Civil War years 1861-1865 were the most tumultuous in the American monetary system. It started in December 1861, when continuing Confederate victories made it clear to the North that it would not be an easy Yankee win. Men were dying by the thousands, and the outcome of the conflict was in serious doubt. "Hard money" began to be hoarded, and by the end of December, banks stopped paying out gold coins, and the Treasury held back any on hand scheduled for release. Immediately, gold coins began to sell for a premium in terms of federal and private paper money.

The United States issued the first Legal Tender paper currency notes in April 1862, at a time when the public's confidence in the government was uncertain, gold coins were nowhere to be seen, and now silver coins were rapidly becoming scarce. Such notes were largely unwanted outside of the North, and, for example, in the financial district of London they were not accepted. Gold coins continued to rise in value, and in the early summer there was a small premium on silver as well. The situation worsened as the year went on, and hoarding increased. However, the West Coast was largely immune from this and other effects of the Civil War, and silver coins were aplenty in circulation. Legal Tender notes were not used there, and in California it was *illegal* to use paper money!

Matters came to a head in July, when even the "lowly" copper-nickel Flying Eagle and Indian cents were hoarded. All of a sudden, there were *no coins at all* in circulation in New York City, Philadelphia, and other centers of commerce! It became impossible to buy a newspaper, or get a haircut, or buy a cup of coffee.

This breach was filled with a spate of coin substitutes, including imprinted pasteboard cards, paper scrip notes, and cent-size tokens.

The Act of July 16, 1862, provided that *postage stamps* of the ordinary variety could be used for money. These were used by placing them in small envelopes containing 10, 25, or 50 cents' worth, often with an advertisement printed on the face of the envelope. By that time stamps had already come into wide use, including by pasting them on sheets of paper or card stock.[1]

Copper-nickel Flying Eagle and Indian cents continued to be hoarded, probably as late as December 1863, if an advertisement in the December 1 number of *Thompson's Bank Note & Commercial Recorder* is any indication. At that time, there must have been some demand for these at a premium, enough to warrant this notice:[2]

> **New Pennies**
>
> U.S. Pennies for sale in bags from Ten to One Hundred Dollars, at Ward's Shirt Manufactory, 387 Broadway, N.Y.

Encased Postage Stamps

Among the more innovative substitutes during the coin shortage were encased postage stamps. Patented on August 12, 1862, following an application filed on July 14, these were the brainchild of John Gault, a principal of Kirkpatrick & Gault, a New York City advertising firm located at No. 1 Park Place.[3] These consisted of a brass frame fronted with mica, behind which was placed a regular United States postage stamp of 1¢, 3¢, 5¢, 10¢, 12¢, 24¢, 30¢, or 90¢. Behind the stamp was a thin piece of cardboard used as padding. Of the eight values, most encasements utilized the smaller denominations through 10¢. On the reverse an advertisement or inscription was embossed.

These were fabricated by the Scovill Manufacturing Co. of Waterbury, Connecticut, well-known and long-established maker of brass and copper "Yankee notions," including buttons (in particular), buckles, Hard Times tokens, daguerreotype equipment, etc. The firm was consolidated under that name in January 1850, with roots going back decades earlier. By the mid-1860s the factory could produce 1,500 gross of brass buttons per day, in addition to such products as sheet brass, German silver items, plated metal, brass and silver-plated hinges, military buttons, daguerreotype plates, kerosene burners, brass and German silver thimbles, and "novel and highly ornate styles of metal boxes for druggists' and chemists' use."[4] Encased postage stamps could be produced on button-making machines.

These bright little tokens reached circulation soon after the patent date. *The New-York Daily Tribune*, August 30, 1862, included this under the heading of "City Items":[5]

> A substitute for coin—A friend has shown us a light circular metallic sheath of white metal, for postage stamps of large and small denominations, the face of the stamp being covered with a transparent sheet of mica. It is slightly smaller in diameter than a quarter of a dollar, and is designed to take the place of small silver coin.
>
> The metallic back is to be stamped with the advertisement of the houses ordering them. Their price to purchasers is $20 or less a thousand; to the general public, only the value of their face. The idea is not a bad one.

P.H. Drake

Among the 31 different advertisers on encased postage stamps in 1862-3 was Col. Patrick Henry Drake, a New York entrepreneur who in 1860 formulated Drake's Plantation Bitters.[6] Earlier, following an appointment on January 22, 1856, he had been a toll-taker on a local canal servicing Binghamton, the town of his birth, located in the Southern Tier area of New York State, just north of the Pennsylvania border. In 1857 in Binghamton he formed a partnership with Jerome B. Brown. Subsequently, Brown & Drake marketed Catawba Bitters, a patent medicine put up in an amber bottle of round shape with a thin neck, bulging part way up, of the type called "lady's leg" by bottle collectors today.[1] This seems to have been the forerunner of the Plantation Bitters, launched in 1860, perhaps first marketed for a short time in a round bottle tapered like an elongated barrel,[2] then under a patent dated Binghamton, New York, February 18, 1862, in the familiar amber-colored log-cabin bottle.[3] By this time, he had already (in 1861) formed a partnership with Demas S. Barnes,[4] trading as P.H. Drake & Co. In 1870 another partner, William P. Ward, joined the firm. P.H. Drake & Co. was located in a large wareroom at 13 and 15 Park Row, New York City, and formulated various products for public sale.

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[1] The late Herman K. Crofoot of Moravia, NY, had a large collection of such stamp-affixed paper, and in the early 1950s showed some of them to the author. Later, many of these went to the Smithsonian Institution. Crofoot also had a large collection of Fractional Currency and items relating to F.E. Spinner.

[2] Citation furnished by Eric P. Newman.

[3] Gault, born in Baltimore in 1831, moved with his family to Boston about 1840. When news of the Gold Rush reached his ears, he headed to California via Cape Horn. Five years later he came back to Boston, where he lived with his mother and younger brother Samuel, and worked as a machinist. Of an inventive turn of mind, he secured several patents prior to his encased postage stamps, these earlier items including a lock-stitch mechanism suitable for sewing machines, an illuminated cover for a coal hole, a sharpener for erasers, and improvements on artillery shells.

[4] J. Leander Bishop, *A History of American Manufactures*, Vol. III, pp. 440-441.

[5] From a citation given by Arnold Perl in "Notes on U.S. Encased Postage," *The Numismatist*, June 1966.

[6] Sources include the author's article, "I Don't Touch the Hard Stuff: I Only Drink Drake's Plantation Bitters!" *Rare Coin Review* No. 51, April-May 1984 (and a related article published in *Old Bottle Magazine*, Bend, Oregon); *For Bitters Only*, Carlyn Ring, 1980; *Morning, Noon and Night* almanacs issued by Drake; *The Standard Catalogue of Encased Postage Stamps* by Michael J. Hodder and Q. David Bowers, 1989, pp. 96-98; *Civil War Encased Stamps*, Fred L. Reed III, 1995 edition, Chapter XIII; Wayne Homren's article, "John Gault and J.C. Ayer: Encased Postage Stamp Maker and His Largest Client," in *The Token: America's Other Money*, Coinage of the Americas Conference, October 29, 1994; and a file of Gault memorabilia and ephemera given to the author by Herman Herst, Jr.; these in addition to many contemporary advertisements, directory listings, etc., and examination of Drake's ephemera, including bottles.

In 1858, Barnes, whose multi-faceted career will not be expanded upon separately here, had enlisted Dr. James R. Chilton and one of his associates to analyze Lyon's Magnetic Powders, which Lyon claimed "will destroy garden insects, cockroaches, bedbugs, fleas, ants, moths, and all pests of the vermin kind."[5] In spring 1861, Barnes moved from Park Row to 202 Broadway, an address used later as well.[6]

In the early 1860s the partnership, now known as Drake & Barnes, had premises at 53, 55, and 57 Park Place, near to Kirkpatrick and Gault's offices at 1 Park Place, not far from the earlier-mentioned Park Row. A manufactory and warehouse facility was established at 47 Dey Street. In 1863, Barnes' 202 Broadway facility was also the address given for P.H. Drake. In 1868 P.H. Drake & Co. had its offices at 105 Liberty Street. Other locations could be cited, some being offices, others sales outlets, and still others factories and storage depots.

For his encased postage stamps to advertise Plantation Bitters, Drake utilized all eight denominations listed above, with 1¢ and 3¢ being the most popular. Historian Fred L. Reed III stated that Drake ordered 45,000 encasements from Gault, mostly of the one-cent and three-cent denominations.[7]

About Bitters

Bitters was a generic term used to describe a beverage sold for health or medicinal purposes. Nearly all bitters contained a significant percentage of alcohol, and often this was the main ingredient. Bitters achieved popularity for several reasons:

- In the mid-nineteenth century, *medicines* were often taxed at lower rates than alcoholic beverages.
- Nearly all bitters were advertised with health claims, as a cure or preventative for just about every malady known to mankind, ranging from dyspepsia to scrofula to consumption. In the nineteenth century, as today, this was a powerful attraction.
- Temperance was one of the great American social movements—right along with abolition and women's rights. Temperance advocates might not touch an alcoholic beverage, but *medicines* such as bitters were acceptable. Some alcohol-laced bitters were even sold as *temperance bitters*. Ministers, members of the Anti-Saloon League, and other professed non-tipplers could improve their health by drinking Drake's Plantation Bitters or similar *medicines*.
- A dose of bitters, similar to a dose of alcohol, tended to dull the emotions and promote a hazy feeling of well being. During the Civil War the Union ordered Hostetter's Celebrated Stomach Bitters, a popular brand, typically 50 proof alcohol content, by the carload—leading one historian to comment that Pickett's Charge was probably made less painful by the imbibing of bitters beforehand! Sutlers—or merchants who traveled with the troops—regularly stocked Drake's Plantation Bitters among other labels.

The Distinctive Plantation Bitters Bottle

The product was put up in bottles, usually of a deep amber color, square, and about ten inches high. The bottle is what collectors of that sort of thing (and the present writer numbers himself among such collectors) refer to as a *figural*, for it is in the shape of something else, in this instance, per the patent, a "log cabin or cottage."

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[1] Carlyn Ring, *For Bitters Only*, pp. 125-126, notes that such bottles are rarities today. She cites an advertisement for Brown & Drake's Catawba Bitters in the *Corning* (New York) *Journal*, May 1859. The bottles are lettered in four lines: BROWN & DRAKE / CATAWBA BITTERS / BINGHAMTON / N.Y. Later, P.H. Drake & Co., New York City, continued the Catawba Bitters name, but apparently on a limited basis. • Ring also notes that "Catawba" was used by other makers in such products as Catawba Bitters (James Perkins & Co., Detroit), Catawba Wine Bitters (Kelley's Island Wine & Medicinal Co, Kelley's Island, Ohio), and Catawba Wine Bitters (J.C. Horan & Co., San Francisco).

[2] Per an old sketch; no actual bottle of this format has been seen.

[3] U.S. Design Patent No. 1538.

[4] Demas S. Barnes, born in 1827, died in 1888. He served as U.S. congressman from New York 1867-1869, by which time he was a wealthy man. He was buried in Greenwood Cemetery, Brooklyn, Section 119, Plot 25718, on which stands a stone mausoleum with the entry flanked by two columns, with DEMAS BARNES lettered across the architrave.

[5] Printed in various magazines and newspapers; *e.g.*, *Harper's Weekly*, February 19, 1859, p. 128. The secret of the Magnetic Powder was said by Lyon to have been "brought from the interior of Asia, and is unknown to any other persons." Among those customers finding the marvelous Powder to be efficacious were Gen. Winfield Scott, Cyrus W. Field (of Atlantic cable renown), Judge Meigs (president of the American Institute), and the management of the Astor, St. Nicholas, and Metropolitan hotels in New York City. • A notice of Dr. James R. Chilton, a numismatist, may be found under Adventure No. 17. • Interestingly, Magnetic Powder was also advertised via poetry verses claiming its efficacy in the elimination of bedbugs, but with fewer lines than in the typical poem used by the competing product, G.G.T., sold by Charles H. Goodwin in Exeter, NH (see Adventure No. 39).

[6] Removal notice published in the *New York Herald*, April 26, 1861, and elsewhere.

[7] *Civil War Encased Stamps*, p. 187.

The printed label continues the theme and shows a mansion with a plantation owner on horseback overseeing a group of slaves. Apparently P.H. Drake and D.S. Barnes considered themselves to be benefactors to the world, for a catalogue noted that Drake's Plantation Bitters, also called Old Homestead Tonic, "secure in the confidence of suffering humanity creates an appetite, cures weakness, dullness, constipation, dyspepsia, sour stomach, diarrhea, general debility, jaundice, etc."

The Mysterious Inscription

The Drake concoction consisted of rum from the Caribbean island of St. Croix, to which water and various flavorings were added. On each bottle and label, and on the 1862 encased postage stamps, the cabalistic inscription S.T.1860.X was imprinted, also given with hyphenation as S-T-1860-X. Exactly what the meaning was, no one knew, and many guesses were made. Some suggested "Started Trade in 1860 with $10." In an edition of the almanac published by Drake, *Morning, Noon and Night*, an explanation was given:

> S.T.1860.X., like the initials on the old Roman banners, has a meaning. It represents St. Croix—S.T. being the conventional equivalent of Saint, and 1-8-6-0 standing for the letters C-R-O-I, and so forming, with the concluding X, the word CROIX.
>
> Nothing can be more simple, or, it may be, more appropriate. St. Croix Rum is a stimulating basis of the Plantation Bitters, and it is, therefore in accordance with the fitness of things, that St. Croix should be the basis of their business shibboleth.

The *Morning, Noon and Night* almanac, with a colorful cover, is known in editions of 1870-1, 1871-2, and 1872-3.

In the meantime, advertisements for Drake's Plantation Bitters were painted on rocks near tourist attractions, lettered on the sides of buildings, and emblazoned on fences and signs. Visitors to Niagara Falls or to the Flume in Franconia Notch (New Hampshire) and the nearby Old Man of the Mountain, and travelers along the main line of the Pennsylvania Railroad and passengers on the Day Line up the Hudson River could not miss such notices, some of which could be read hundreds of feet or even the best part of a mile away.[1] It was reported that an effort was made to emblazon the slogan S.T.1860.X on the side of the Great Pyramid in Egypt but that Drake's offer was declined!

Benefits Promised

In what surely must be a case of early-day *chutzpah*, the Drake's almanac recommended Plantation Bitters as a cure for hangovers! Read on:

> Plantation Bitters as a morning tonic. Nausea, physical exhaustion, a confused brain, trembling hands, and a general incapacity for business are the usual morning consequences of undue indulgence in any intoxicating beverage the night before. The morning difficulty is met by those who are foolish enough to incur it, in various ways. In one case the victim drenches his already weakened stomach with soda water; in another, takes the drastic purgative; in a third tries 'a hair of the dog that bit him,' and endeavors to set himself up with a morning dram. All these attempts to restore the system to a normal condition are injudicious—the last worst of all...
>
> It is obvious, therefore, that a stomachic, a nervine, an antibilious medicine, a mild aperient, and a harmless exhilarant are the remedies indicated. PLANTATION BITTERS comprises all these elements, and is consequently the specific required. It invariably relieves all the unpleasant symptoms, and if a small dose of it is taken before breakfast, and another about 10 or 11 o'clock, the effect of the previous night's dissipation will have disappeared by the hour of noon. It would be the height of folly, however, to indulge in inebriety, because this fine vegetable tonic is the best means of arresting its secondary results, inasmuch as hard drinking tells, sooner or later, upon the constitution itself, an exhaustive vital system. It would be about as wise to permit the wheels of a delicate machine to become unnecessarily clogged with dust and filth, because a brush and seed oil will cleanse them, as to indulge in habitual intoxication, because PLANTATION BITTERS will cure the disagreeable sensations occasioned by casual intemperance.

Not to worry. At the recommended dosage of three wineglassfuls a day, it seems that "the previous night's dissipation" would just blend into the inebriety of the following evening!

Inside the Drake's Bottle

Advertised as, "Purely a vegetable preparation comprised simply of well known roots, herbs, and fruits combined with other properties," the label gave no clue that the product was nearly entirely pure rum. The formula:

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[1] Fred L. Reed in *Civil War Encased Stamps*, p. 194, cites an English traveler's observation: "If you stand by the Profile Mountain to gaze on the wonderful old stone face, your eye is arrested by Drake's Plantation Bitters." The "old stone face," or Old Man of the Mountain, forms the subject for Adventure No. 50 in the present text. • The DRAKE'S PLANTATION BITTERS lettering on a rock wall at the Flume is depicted on nineteenth-century stereograph cards and shows the inscription to be rather crudely painted in white (presumably) letters.

> Angostura or calisaya bark, 4 ounces
> Chamomile flowers, 1 ounce
> Cardamom bark, 2 drams
> Orange peel, 1 ounce
> Raisins, 1 pound
> St. Croix rum, 2 gallons
> Macerate for one month, then press and filter

The September 4, 1863 issue of the *Willimantic* (Connecticut) *Journal* included this advertisement by J.G. Rathbun, an apothecary at the Allyn House, Hartford, for this "excellent appetizer":

> Drake's Plantation Bitters. Having the largest sale probably of anything of the sort ever brought before the public, and we believe them to be an excellent appetizer. Put up in large bottles and sold at the very low price of 75 cents (advertised price one dollar). Sold also by the case of one dozen bottles.

The Power of Advertising

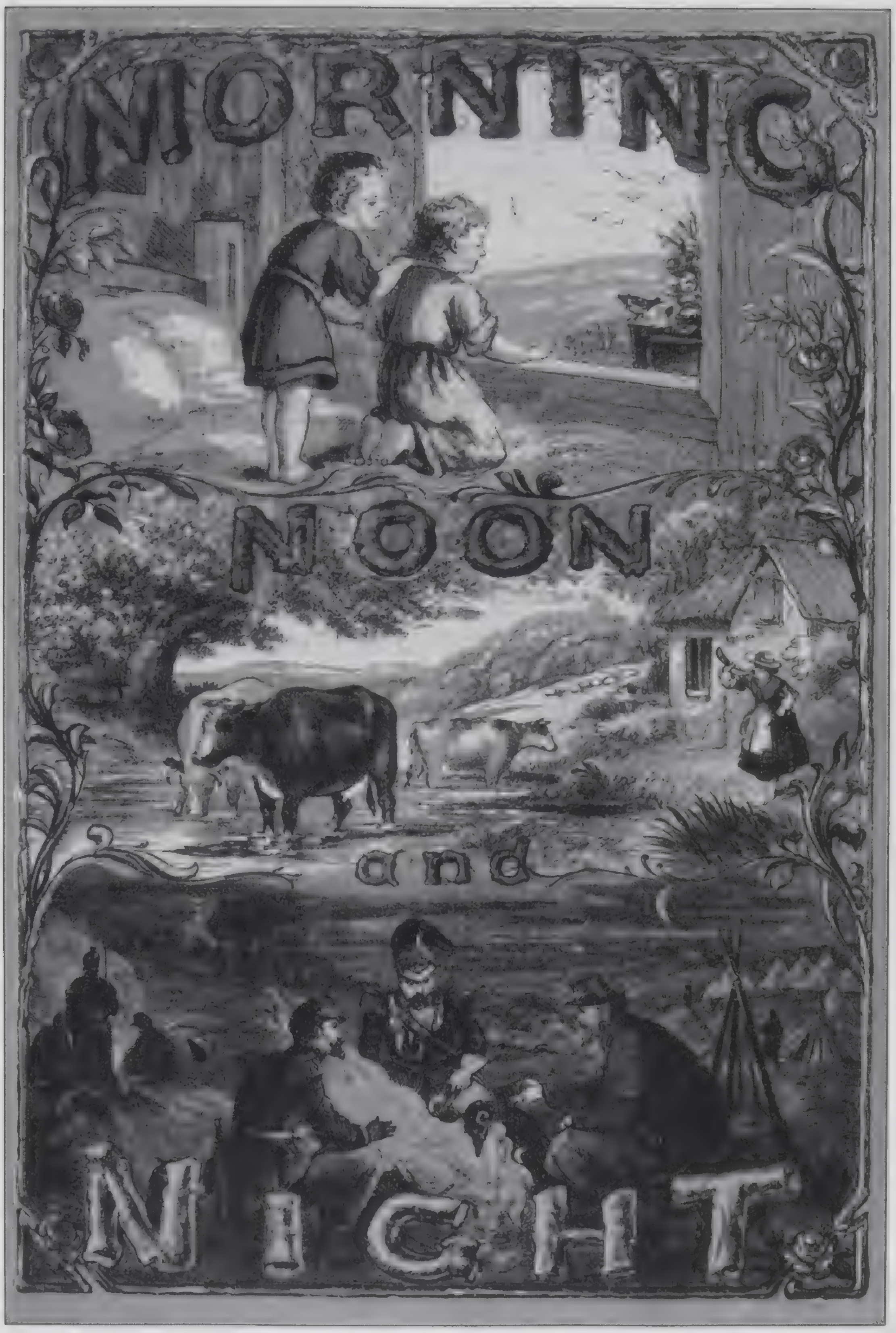
In 1869, the *Morning, Noon and Night* almanac noted the success of the firm's main product:

> The popularity of Plantation Bitters is founded on a rock of experience. Its name is as familiar to every household in the land as that of the ordinary staples of life, and it ranks as an article of prime necessity wherever sickness is present or health is in peril.
>
> The continual increase in the consumption of Plantation Bitters—to which, judging from present indications, there is no assignable limit—demands from year to year a corresponding increase in the facilities of its manufacturer. In 1868 the sales were nearly five million bottles, and the sales for 1869 are already upwards of six and a quarter millions.
>
> To keep pace with a growing demand, large and costly additions have been made by Drake & Co. to the machinery, etc., in their manufactory, and many ingenious improvements have been introduced in the chemical department which greatly expedite the production of the article. New inventions have also been applied in the bottling and packing departments, by which the repetity of these processes has been promoted, and several new receivers of extraordinary capacity have been added to the ranges of tanks previously in use. The factory is now capable of turning out nearly ten million bottles annually, and at the present rate of increase in the demand, that quantity will be barely sufficient to fill the orders, foreign and domestic, for 1875.
>
> The business has attained its present vast proportions in the short period of nine years—a specimen of commercial progress which it would be difficult to match in the mercantile history of even this go-ahead country. It would be an insult to the proverbial sagacity of the people to ask if any save an *article of sterling value* could have obtained the commanding position now occupied by the Plantation Bitters in the national market...
>
> Only a few mercantile establishments in this country yield a clear income larger than the amount annually expended in the mere *advertising* of the Plantation Bitters, to say nothing of the cost of materials and manufacture, for charges for transportation, the duties paid to the government, and other incidental expenses. When it is remembered that the ability to afford these immense disbursements is founded solely on the pecuniary success of the article, and that it is only nine years since it was first offered to the world, the public can guess for themselves what that success must have been. They will see, too, that it cannot be based on anything but the superior merits of the preparation that has achieved this unprecedented triumph.

In 1870 the firm was to proclaim that its almanac was distributed yearly to the extent of six million copies at a cost of $120,000. Success went to the heads of those in charge, and soon fortune-telling was engaged in. Obviously, those writing advertising copy at Drake & Co., considered themselves to be oracles on just about every area of life imaginable. Comments on the morality of individuals in New York and Paris society were printed, as were observations about Englishmen, the summer season at Saratoga Springs (New York), and the activities of pawnbrokers. Predictions for the future were printed with reckless abandon. With a shotgun approach, it was inevitable that some of these would bear fruit. Disregarding numerous failed predictions, the advertising copy noted in 1871 of the success of the forecasts the previous year, 1870:

> The singularly accurate fulfillment of some of the prophecies for 1870, made in the last issue of *Morning, Noon and Night*, occasioned no small amount of astonishment among its multitudinous readers.
>
> Letters have been received from professors of astrology in various parts of the country inquiring the character of the celestial indicia upon which the predictions were based, the method of calculation employed in arriving at conclusions so truthful. Other parties, who seemed to have mistaken our scientific contributor for an ordinary soothsayer, have written for information as to their future, in pretty much the same style as if they had been addressing some advertising charlatan, who retails his blind guesses at so much per fib.
>
> Once and for all, we would say that the gentleman who furnishes the annual horoscope, and other astrological data for this publication, limits his prophecy to its pages. He has faith in astrology, of which he has unquestionably a more profound knowledge than any other man on this side of the Atlantic...

In those days of long ago it was the custom for many, if not most, newspapers to accept patent medicine ad-


MORNING
NOON
and
NIGHT

Drake's Plantation Bitters as promoted and memorialized in the pages of the almanac, *Morning, Noon and Night,* the cover of which is shown here, followed by several pages from the publication.

A GLORIOUS CHANGE.

That any sick man survived the treatment of fifty years ago must be considered a proof that human beings are very hard to kill. The lancet, calomel, cantharides, and drastic purgatives, were then the order of the day. The physician played into the hands of the apothecary, and the unfortunate patient was drenched, morning, noon, and night, with prostrating medicines.

We live in a more rational and conscientious era; the importance of supporting Nature in its conflict with disease is now understood. Complaints, in themselves weakening, are no longer aggravated by artificial depletion; they are met with TONICS that rally the vital powers and enable them to defeat the enemy. Chief among these allies of Nature in its battles with sickness is

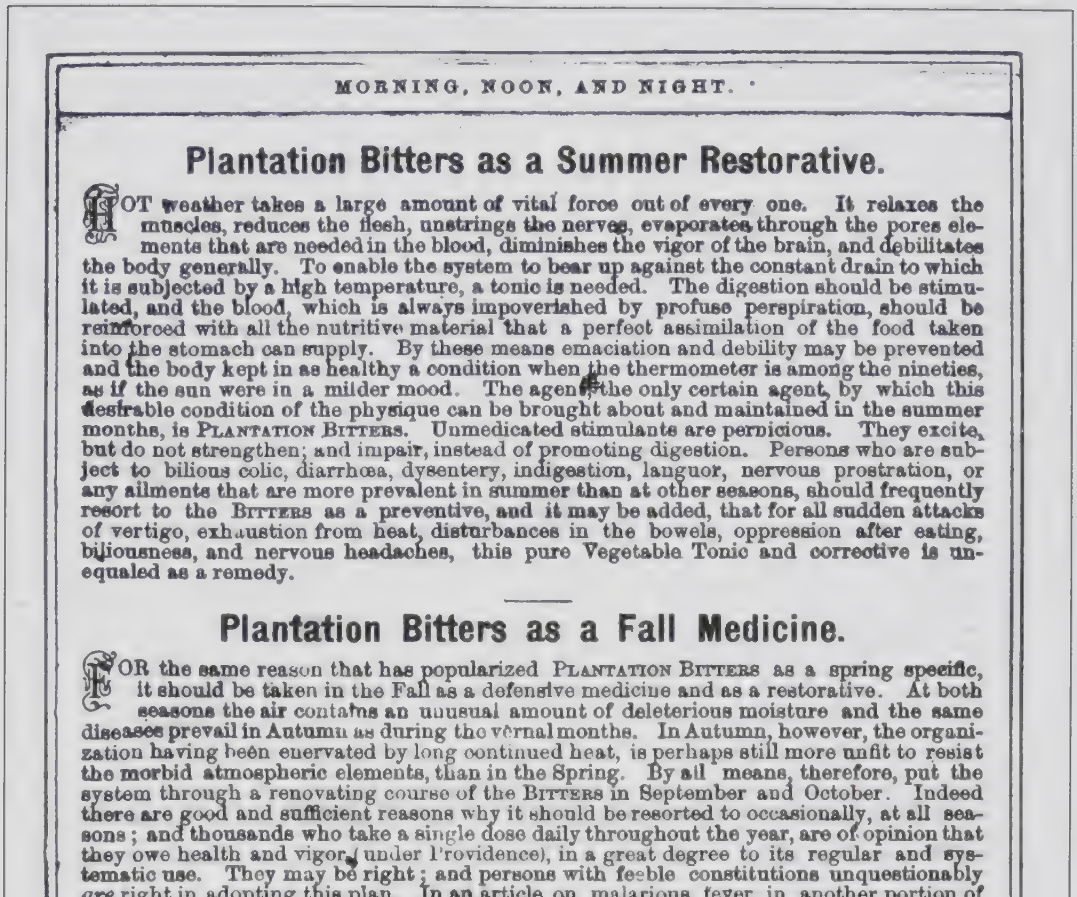
PLANTATION BITTERS.

This wonderful vegetable restorative is the sheet-anchor of the feeble and debilitated. As a cordial for the aged and decrepit it has no equal among stomachics. As a remedy for the nervous weakness to which the tender sex are especially subject, it is superseding every other stimulant and nervine. In all climates, tropical, temperate, or frigid, it acts as a specific in every species of disorder which undermines the bodily strength and breaks down the animal spirits.

Wherever it is introduced it becomes a standard article—a medicinal staple. Druggists, although their profit upon it is small, find it absolutely necessary to keep a preparation for which every body inquires, and for which nobody will accept a substitute. It is to-day the most popular medicine in the civilized world. Extensively as it is advertised, its best advertisement is the beneficial result which uniformly follows its use. Every bottle sold insures the sale of at least half a dozen more.

Unlike other stimulants it braces and fortifies the system, without exciting undue cerebral action. The cheering effect which it produces upon the mind is not momentary, but permanent; there is no subsequent depression. It does not, as is the case with all other stimuli, beget a craving for excitants. On the other hand it soothes and calms the nerves, combining, strange as the anomaly may seem, the qualities of a sedative and gentle anodyne, with those of a tonic and invigorant. The perfect purity of all its ingredients, their admirable adaptation to the purposes they are intended to subserve, the judicious proportions in which they are combined, and the scientific skill with which they are blended, render this famous article at once the most potent and the most harmless of all known tonics and alteratives.

SOLD BY ALL DRUGGISTS.



Plantation Bitters as a Summer Restorative.

HOT weather takes a large amount of vital force out of every one. It relaxes the muscles, reduces the flesh, unstrings the nerves, evaporates through the pores elements that are needed in the blood, diminishes the vigor of the brain, and debilitates the body generally. To enable the system to bear up against the constant drain to which it is subjected by a high temperature, a tonic is needed. The digestion should be stimulated, and the blood, which is always impoverished by profuse perspiration, should be reinforced with all the nutritive material that a perfect assimilation of the food taken into the stomach can supply. By these means emaciation and debility may be prevented and the body kept in as healthy a condition when the thermometer is among the nineties, as if the sun were in a milder mood. The agent, the only certain agent, by which this desirable condition of the physique can be brought about and maintained in the summer months, is Plantation Bitters. Unmedicated stimulants are pernicious. They excite, but do not strengthen; and impair, instead of promoting digestion. Persons who are subject to bilious colic, diarrhœa, dysentery, indigestion, languor, nervous prostration, or any ailments that are more prevalent in summer than at other seasons, should frequently resort to the Bitters as a preventive, and it may be added, that for all sudden attacks of vertigo, exhaustion from heat, disturbances in the bowels, oppression after eating, biliousness, and nervous headaches, this pure Vegetable Tonic and corrective is unequaled as a remedy.

Plantation Bitters as a Fall Medicine.

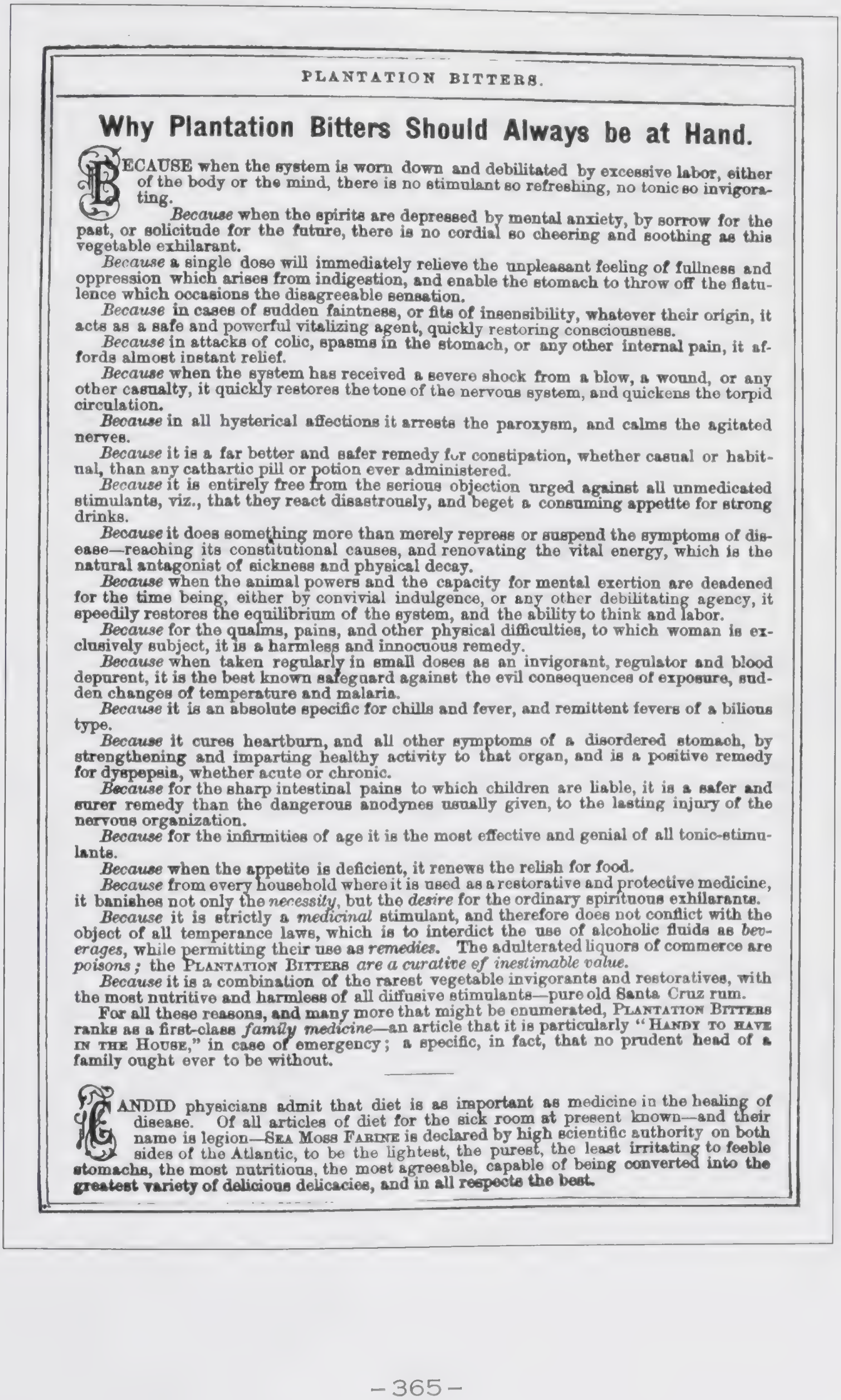
FOR the same reason that has popularized Plantation Bitters as a spring specific, it should be taken in the Fall as a defensive medicine and as a restorative. At both seasons the air contains an unusual amount of deleterious moisture and the same diseases prevail in Autumn as during the vernal months. In Autumn, however, the organization having been enervated by long continued heat, is perhaps still more unfit to resist the morbid atmospheric elements, than in the Spring. By all means, therefore, put the system through a renovating course of the Bitters in September and October. Indeed there are good and sufficient reasons why it should be resorted to occasionally, at all seasons; and thousands who take a single dose daily throughout the year, are of opinion that they owe health and vigor, (under Providence), in a great degree to its regular and systematic use. They may be right; and persons with feeble constitutions unquestionably *are* right in adopting this plan. In an article on malarious fever, in another portion of this book, the extraordinary value of the Bitters, as a preventive and curative of chills and fever, bilious remittents, etc., is fully shown. Chronic indigestion is generally aggravated by the sudden and marked variations of temperature which occur in the Fall months, and for indigestion in all its stages, the Bitters may be safely pronounced infallible.

Plantation Bitters as a Winter Stimulant and Tonic.

WE need more food in Winter than at any other season, for food is the fuel of the system, and a large amount of caloric is required for vital purposes in inclement weather, because of the greater quantity of vital heat abstracted from the body by the severe cold. In order to enable the primary generator of animal heat, the stomach, to digest the additional amount of nourishment which the appetite demands and the physique requires in winter, a wholesome stimulant and tonic is often necessary. Spirits and strong wines, are therefore considered necessary to a greater extent during that season than at any other period of the year, on the supposition that they assist digestion. This, however, is a mistake. The liquors and wines of commerce are *stimulants;* but in their simple state, they are *not tonics* in the true sense of the word. It is only when a spirituous liquor exceptionally pure, is medicated with the finest vegetable invigorants, and alteratives, as in the case of Plantation Bitters, that a tonic of the highest excellence is produced. The Bitters deservedly stand at the head of all the anti-dyspeptic medicines which pharmacy and chemistry have as yet given to mankind. Consequently the standard restorative is an article of pure necessity to persons whose systems need more food than their stomachs are able to digest thoroughly. As a stimulant and invigorant for individuals with weak stomachs, it is perfectly invaluable as a winter medicine.

VENTILATING CHAMBERS.—If a lamp or candle, or a very little fire, is kept burning in a fire-place at night, a draught is created up the chimney, by which the foulest air in the room is carried out with great rapidity.

In all cases where there is a fire-place in a chamber, it should by all means be kept open.



PLANTATION BITTERS.

Why Plantation Bitters Should Always be at Hand.

BECAUSE when the system is worn down and debilitated by excessive labor, either of the body or the mind, there is no stimulant so refreshing, no tonic so invigorating.

Because when the spirits are depressed by mental anxiety, by sorrow for the past, or solicitude for the future, there is no cordial so cheering and soothing as this vegetable exhilarant.

Because a single dose will immediately relieve the unpleasant feeling of fullness and oppression which arises from indigestion, and enable the stomach to throw off the flatulence which occasions the disagreeable sensation.

Because in cases of sudden faintness, or fits of insensibility, whatever their origin, it acts as a safe and powerful vitalizing agent, quickly restoring consciousness.

Because in attacks of colic, spasms in the stomach, or any other internal pain, it affords almost instant relief.

Because when the system has received a severe shock from a blow, a wound, or any other casualty, it quickly restores the tone of the nervous system, and quickens the torpid circulation.

Because in all hysterical affections it arrests the paroxysm, and calms the agitated nerves.

Because it is a far better and safer remedy for constipation, whether casual or habitual, than any cathartic pill or potion ever administered.

Because it is entirely free from the serious objection urged against all unmedicated stimulants, viz., that they react disastrously, and beget a consuming appetite for strong drinks.

Because it does something more than merely repress or suspend the symptoms of disease—reaching its constitutional causes, and renovating the vital energy, which is the natural antagonist of sickness and physical decay.

Because when the animal powers and the capacity for mental exertion are deadened for the time being, either by convivial indulgence, or any other debilitating agency, it speedily restores the equilibrium of the system, and the ability to think and labor.

Because for the qualms, pains, and other physical difficulties, to which woman is exclusively subject, it is a harmless and innocuous remedy.

Because when taken regularly in small doses as an invigorant, regulator and blood depurent, it is the best known safeguard against the evil consequences of exposure, sudden changes of temperature and malaria.

Because it is an absolute specific for chills and fever, and remittent fevers of a bilious type.

Because it cures heartburn, and all other symptoms of a disordered stomach, by strengthening and imparting healthy activity to that organ, and is a positive remedy for dyspepsia, whether acute or chronic.

Because for the sharp intestinal pains to which children are liable, it is a safer and surer remedy than the dangerous anodynes usually given, to the lasting injury of the nervous organization.

Because for the infirmities of age it is the most effective and genial of all tonic-stimulants.

Because when the appetite is deficient, it renews the relish for food.

Because from every household where it is used as a restorative and protective medicine, it banishes not only the *necessity*, but the *desire* for the ordinary spirituous exhilarants.

Because it is strictly a *medicinal* stimulant, and therefore does not conflict with the object of all temperance laws, which is to interdict the use of alcoholic fluids as *beverages*, while permitting their use as *remedies*. The adulterated liquors of commerce are *poisons;* the PLANTATION BITTERS *are a curative of inestimable value.*

Because it is a combination of the rarest vegetable invigorants and restoratives, with the most nutritive and harmless of all diffusive stimulants—pure old Santa Cruz rum.

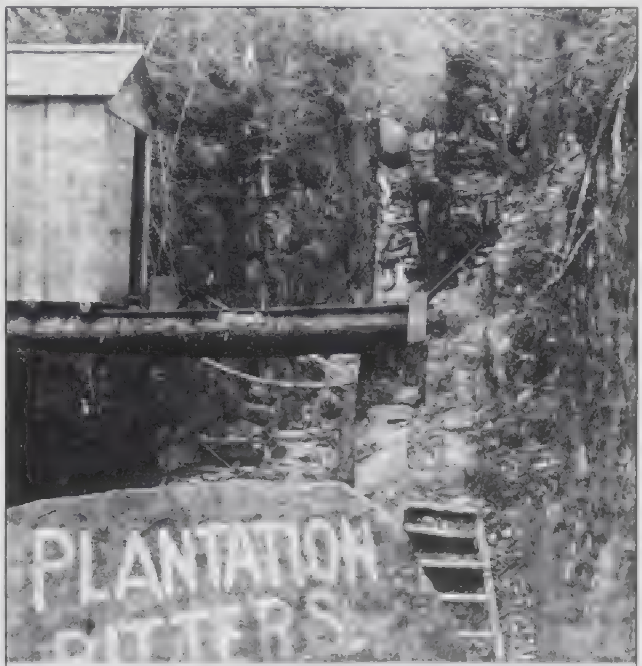
For all these reasons, and many more that might be enumerated, PLANTATION BITTERS ranks as a first-class *family medicine*—an article that it is particularly "HANDY TO HAVE IN THE HOUSE," in case of emergency; a specific, in fact, that no prudent head of a family ought ever to be without.

CANDID physicians admit that diet is as important as medicine in the healing of disease. Of all articles of diet for the sick room at present known—and their name is legion—SEA MOSS FARINE is declared by high scientific authority on both sides of the Atlantic, to be the lightest, the purest, the least irritating to feeble stomachs, the most nutritious, the most agreeable, capable of being converted into the **greatest variety of delicious delicacies, and in all respects the best.**

vertising on a contract basis, often guaranteeing that favorable editorial material would appear in conjunction with the paid for space. Thus, newspaper articles such as this one from the *New York Tribune* must be taken, as they say, with a grain of salt:

> Calisaya Bark. It is said that P.H. Drake & Co., proprietors of the Plantation Bitters, are the largest importers of calisaya bark in this country, and that with the exception of an occasional sale, that all they import is used in the compounding of the celebrated Plantation Bitters, and to which they are undoubtedly indebted for their wonderful health restoring properties; as a tonic and appetizer they are not surpassed, and we can cheerfully recommend them.

In the 1860s and 1870s, as now, the earth would have been depopulated if everyone contracting an upset stomach, a restless feeling, aches and pains, and other maladies were to end up in a funeral parlor a few days later. Unattended, most such distresses take care of themselves. Thus, tormented souls who took Drake's Plantation Bitters had no better odds of recovery, for or against, than people who had never heard of the substance. But, considering the nearly complete alcoholic content of The Product, perhaps imbibers of Plantation Bitters enjoyed their illnesses more!



Visitors to the Flume, a scenic attraction in Franconia Notch, New Hampshire, were greeted with an advertisement for Plantation Bitters.

Competition

As might be expected, the enthusiastic, aggressive, and widespread advertising of Drake's Plantation Bitters spawned a number of competitors. What owner of a chemical or patent medicine firm would not be jealous when reading of the annual production figures of millions of bottles? So, numerous imitations arose.

There were, for example, O.K. Plantation Bitters and Woodgate's Plantation Bitters, each put up in a log-cabin format amber bottle measuring ten inches high and looking for all the world just like the Drake's product.

Perhaps the most intriguing imitator of all was E. Dexter Loveridge, who made the enchantingly-named Wahoo[1] Bitters, complete with his own imitation of S.T.1860.X., a cryptogram which read: D.W.D.1863.X.X.X.! The exclamation point, we might clarify, is ours, not that of Mr. Loveridge's advertising writer.

Wahoo Bitters differed somewhat in composition in that instead of St. Croix rum it contained another equally efficacious product, to wit:

> The Wahoo bitters are entirely vegetable, being composed of some twenty different roots and barks. This compound was procured in part from the most eminent Indian physicians known among our northwestern tribes; the balance from my own botanical research, and is a profound secret, making the best compound ever invented for the preservation of health.
>
> The spirits used to preserve these bitters so that they will keep in any climate is not an adulterated alcohol, flavored with poisonous drugs, and claimed to be a foreign importation, but is PURE RYE WHISKEY...

Drake's Plantation Bitters had its heyday in the 1860s and early 1870s, but was marketed for a long time afterward, probably mostly to old-time users, including in a McKesson & Robbins (New York) catalogue of 1896-7 and a Jerman, Pflueger & Keuhmstadt (Chicago) catalogue of 1901-2, among others.[2]

Other bitters manufacturers ignored the log cabin and plantation theme and went in other directions. The naming of The Product became an art, and the more obscure or confusing the name, the better! Thus such products as Dr. Hardy's Cathartic Electuary Bitters, Carey's Grecian Bend Bitters, Schroeder's Woodcock Pepsin Bitters, Tincture of Centaury Bitters, Esculapea Bitters, Dr. Doty's Celebrated Mandrake Freedom and Unity Bitters, Barto's Great Gun Bitters, and the immodestly-named Best Bitters in America each attracted a following. Typically, labels proclaimed that alcohol, actually a prime reason why people bought the stuff, was present only as a preservative!

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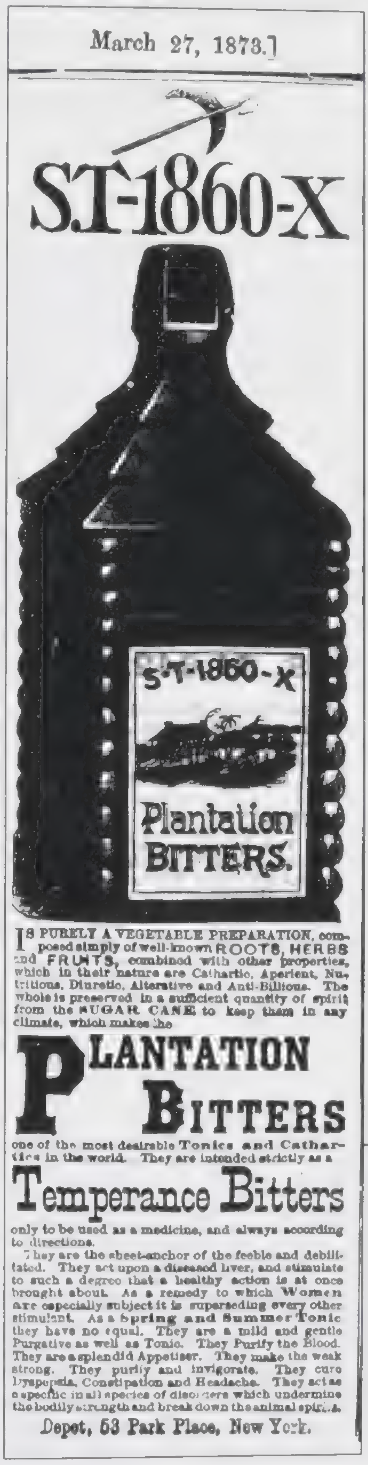
[1] Wahoo has multiple meanings in lexicography, including "balderdash" or "nonsense," as well as being the name of a mythical fish that could drink an amount equal to twice its weight. We wonder if the imaginative Loveridge was aware of this.

[2] Carlyn Ring, *For Bitters Only*, p. 170.

Related Drake's Products

Further benefits for purchasers were promised by other products offered by P.H. Drake and his company. Mexican Mustang Liniment was billed as having been "tested for over 30 years, and is found to be the most reliable remedy for flesh, bone and muscle ailments ever discovered. It is equally adapted to man and animals." In a testimonial Henry S. Libby, of Charlotte, North Carolina, wrote that he "completely cured a trotting mare of bone-splint and spavin by its use," while S.E. Burchard wrote to say that after applying Mexican Mustang Liniment injuries sustained from a ladder fall were completely healed and, in the process, he saved over $100 in doctor's bills.


March 27, 1873.]

S.T-1860-X

S-T-1860-X
Plantation
BITTERS.

IS PURELY A VEGETABLE PREPARATION, composed simply of well-known ROOTS, HERBS and FRUITS, combined with other properties, which in their nature are Cathartic, Aperient, Nutritious, Diuretic, Alterative and Anti-Billious. The whole is preserved in a sufficient quantity of spirit from the SUGAR CANE to keep them in any climate, which makes the

PLANTATION BITTERS

one of the most desirable Tonics and Cathartics in the world. They are intended strictly as a

Temperance Bitters

only to be used as a medicine, and always according to directions.

They are the sheet-anchor of the feeble and debilitated. They act upon a diseased liver, and stimulate to such a degree that a healthy action is at once brought about. As a remedy to which Women are especially subject it is superseding every other stimulant. As a Spring and Summer Tonic they have no equal. They are a mild and gentle Purgative as well as Tonic. They Purify the Blood. They are a splendid Appetiser. They make the weak strong. They purify and invigorate. They cure Dyspepsia, Constipation and Headache. They act as a specific in all species of disorders which undermine the bodily strength and break down the animal spirits.

Depot, 53 Park Place, New York.

Magnolia Water, another P.H. Drake & Co. concoction, was advertised as an indispensable toilet luxury. "A small quantity of it mingled with a bath has a marked and delightful effect... So potent is its influence in allaying the fleshed appearance induced by heat and toil, and adding to beauty a new and fresher bloom, that it has frequently been compared to the enchanted waters of the Fountain of Perennial Youth."

Hagan's Magnolia Balm apparently was a related product that was issued under the imprint of the Lyon Manufacturing Company, a firm controlled by P.H. Drake & Co.

Lyon's Kathairon "for preserving, restoring and beautifying the hair and to prevent its falling off and turning gray" was likewise sold. Sea Moss Farine, said to have been made from Iceland moss or carrageen, was particularly recommended for pulmonary afflictions. Still another product was Gettysburg Katalysine Water, bottled on the historic battlefield of Civil War fame but dispensed through P.H. Drake & Co.

Sazerac Aromatic Bitters, the name of which may have been taken from Sazerac brandy imported from Messrs. Sazerac de Forge et Fils, Limoges, France, was put up in a bottle similar in shape to that used in the 1850s for the Brown & Drake Catawba Bitters: a round bottle with a lady's leg neck.[1] The substance is believed to have been first compounded in New Orleans "from a secret formula based upon boiled herbs." In raised letters on the face of the bottle is the monogram PHD, presumably (but not certainly) representing P.H. Drake & Co. On the bottom of the bottle (underside) in raised letters in a circle is SAZERAC AROMATIC BITTERS.

In the 1870s both Drake and Barnes were millionaires. Drake died in 1883, but his Plantation Bitters lived after him, and, as noted, was marketed through the turn of the twentieth century. He never knew that two decades after his passing Drake's and other encased postage stamps would begin to create a great deal of numismatic attention, and that decades later, beginning in the 1960s, bottle collecting would become a nationwide hobby, and his log-cabin bottles would become desired by just about every collector.

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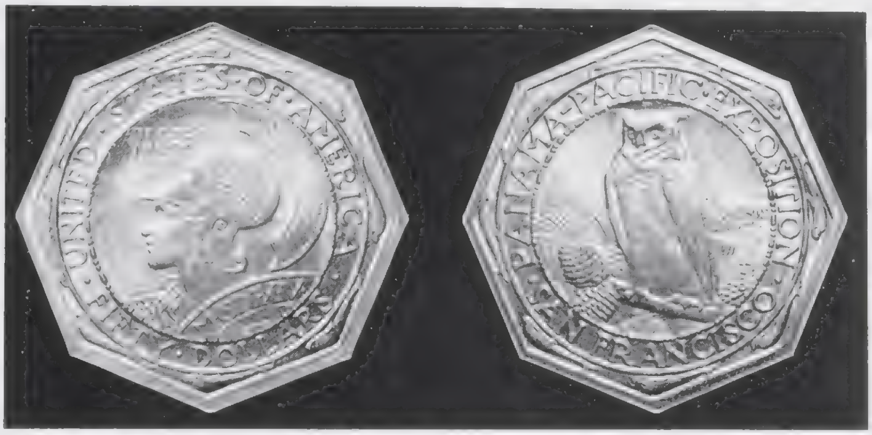
[1] Information mostly from Carlyn Ring, *For Bitters Only*, pp. 420-421. • Sazerac bottles, not rare today, are seen in milk glass. Amber bottles are rare and cobalt-color bottles are extremely rare. Ring cites Sazerac Bitters (not "Aromatic") marketed in 1871 in Troy, New York, by Gates H. Barnard & Bro., "sole agents," and, separately, Sazerac brandy sold in New Orleans by Thomas H. Handy & Co., 1872, the last related to the original compounder of the bitters.

ADVENTURE NO. 42

THE "TOO CLASSIC" 1915-S PANAMA-PACIFIC $50

Tradition Criticized



The 1915-S Panama-Pacific International Exposition commemorative $50 gold coin of octagonal format, a style reminiscent of the "slugs" of the Gold Rush era. Although 1,509 were produced, sales fell short of expectations, and only 645 were sold.

Today, such pieces are highly desired by numismatists, but in their own era they were without honor in the eyes of certain reviewers.

The Exposition

In 1915 visitors from all over the world converged on a veritable new city that had been built of lath and plaster on the San Francisco shorefront. Building upon the tradition established by the 1876 Centennial Exhibition (Philadelphia), 1892-1893 World's Columbian Exposition (Chicago), the 1900 Paris Exposition, the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair, and other such events, the Pan-Pacific showcased marvels of technology, art, history, and science. The official reason for the Exposition was to celebrate San Francisco's rebirth from the 1906 earthquake and fire and to observe the opening (in August 1914) of the Panama Canal.

After the event ended, nearly everything was torn down. An exception was the Palace of Fine Arts, which, while never intended to be a permanent structure, survived to be used to store fire engines and other municipal equipment, later to be restored and reopened to the public. This building in 1915 was the numismatic focal point of the Exposition. Under its huge dome was Farran Zerbe's Money of the World exhibit and, after the fair's closing, his concession to sell the remaining Pan-Pacific coins by mail order.

Today the five different coins issued in connection with the Panama-Pacific International Exposition stand as the high water mark among American commemoratives. Of these five, perhaps the most distinctive is the octagonal $50 gold coin inspired by the "slugs" of the Gold Rush era, 1851-2.

Story of the Exposition Coins

Frank Morton Todd's five-volume study, *The Story of the Exposition*, published in 1921, told this about the coinage:

> On the basis of federal legislation the Exposition instituted an official Coin and Medal Department, and put it under the direction of Farran Zerbe, as past president of the American Numismatic Association. The

Scene from the Exposition: "Wind and Spray" a sculpture by Anna Coleman Ladd, with the Palace of Fine Arts in the background. (From Frank Norton Todd's *The Story of the Exposition*, 1921)

Act of Congress provided that a series of commemorative medals, a souvenir medal, the award medal, and the diplomas, were to be produced by the government and delivered to the Exposition at face value for the coins and at cost for other items.

In spite of the delay, whereby the coins were not ready until well after the fair opened, the Coinage Department took in $179,506 in the Exposition period, and $51,966 in the post-Exposition time. The whole net return of the Exposition's coin and medal business after deducting the cost of materials and all administration came to $65,555.09.

60,000 commemorative half dollars were coined, of which 34 were reserved for assay. Of the 59,966 pieces available, 27,100 were sold and 32,866 were destroyed later at the Mint. 25,034 gold dollars were coined, of which 34 were used for assay and the balance all sold. 10,017 $2.50 gold pieces were struck, of which 17 were used for assay, leaving 10,000 available. Of these 10,000 there were 6,750 sold and the rest, 3,250 pieces, were melted.

There were 1,509 of the octagonal $50 pieces made, of which nine were used for assay, 645 were actually sold and 854 went to the melting pot. There were 1,510 round $50 pieces including 10 for assay. Just 483 were sold. 1,017 were melted.

All of the commemorative Exposition coins were struck at the San Francisco Mint and bear the "S" mintmark. For the coining of the $50 pieces a special hydraulic press weighing 14 tons, with a striking power of 450 tons, ordinarily used at the Philadelphia Mint for striking medals, was delivered to the San Francisco Mint.

The striking of the first octagonal $50 gold piece, the largest coin ever authorized by the government, and the first minted since 1852 of any other shape than circular, was made a notable occasion at the Mint. The superintendent, Mr. T.W.H. Shanahan, extended invitations to various dignitaries and to members of the American Numismatic Association, to be present at 11:00 on the morning of June 21, 1915, when the first of these coins was struck.

Supt. Shanahan produced the first piece, incorrectly stating that he was about to strike the first $50 coin ever issued under authority of law in the United States.[1] He then pulled the lever and handed the resultant coin to Mr. Moore for inspection. Moore then operated the lever for the second piece, and other members of the party took their turns at making money, keeping up the delightful exercise until lunch time.

The various commemorative coins were in good demand. Advance orders amounted to a sales volume of $40,000. Prices were: half dollars, $1 each or six for $5. Gold dollar, $2 each, or six for $10. $2.50 gold pieces, $4 each, or six for $20. $50 gold pieces, either shape, $100 each. Complete sets mounted in metal frames or leather cases sold for $200. That both shapes of the $50 pieces were of the same design was a disappointment and in many cases limited the sale to one coin. On this account, toward the end of the Exposition, sets with a choice of one $50 piece were sold at $100 each.

Many sales were made to banks throughout the country. Usually they were of sets mounted in copper frames. With the close of the Exposition this exhibit was moved to the Palace of Fine Arts, where it looked very much at home and continued as a sales agency over the post-Exposition period to May 1, 1916. The Department was continued on mail order basis, down to November 1, 1916, when, at the request of the Exposition and by authority of the Secretary of the Treasury, most of the coins remaining unsold were returned to the Mint and destroyed.

In the years since 1916, the Panama-Pacific coins have been highly prized by numismatists. Today, the large and impressive $50 coins are especially admired, and it is always a memorable occasion when examples cross the auction block.

The Design of the $50 Pieces

Robert I. Aitken, a New York artist, designed the octagonal and round 1915-S Panama-Pacific International Exposition $50 pieces, both of which have the same design, except that unlike the round issue, the octagonal coins display dolphins in the angles on the obverse and reverse between the inscription and the points of the border.

The obverse depicts Minerva, according to the official description "The Goddess of Wisdom, Skill, Contemplation, Spinning, Weaving and of Agriculture and Horticulture"—obviously, an all-around, ideal type of mythological person!

The reverse, according to the original publicity, depicts an "owl, sacred to Minerva, the accepted symbol of wisdom, perched upon a branch of western pine." The dolphins in the angles of the octagonal piece were placed there, "suggesting as they encircle the central field, the uninterrupted water route made possible by the Panama Canal." Both varieties of coins bore the date as MCMXV, perhaps following the Roman numeral dating precedent set by Saint-Gaudens' beautiful $20 MCMVII of 1907 (discussed as Adventure No. 32).

On January 23, 1915, Robert Aitken wrote to T.P. Dewey, acting director of the Mint, enclosing sketches of the obverse and reverse, noting that his design was to represent the Exposition theme of the products of wisdom and industry. The symbols of Minerva and the owl, "all full of beauty in themselves" express "the

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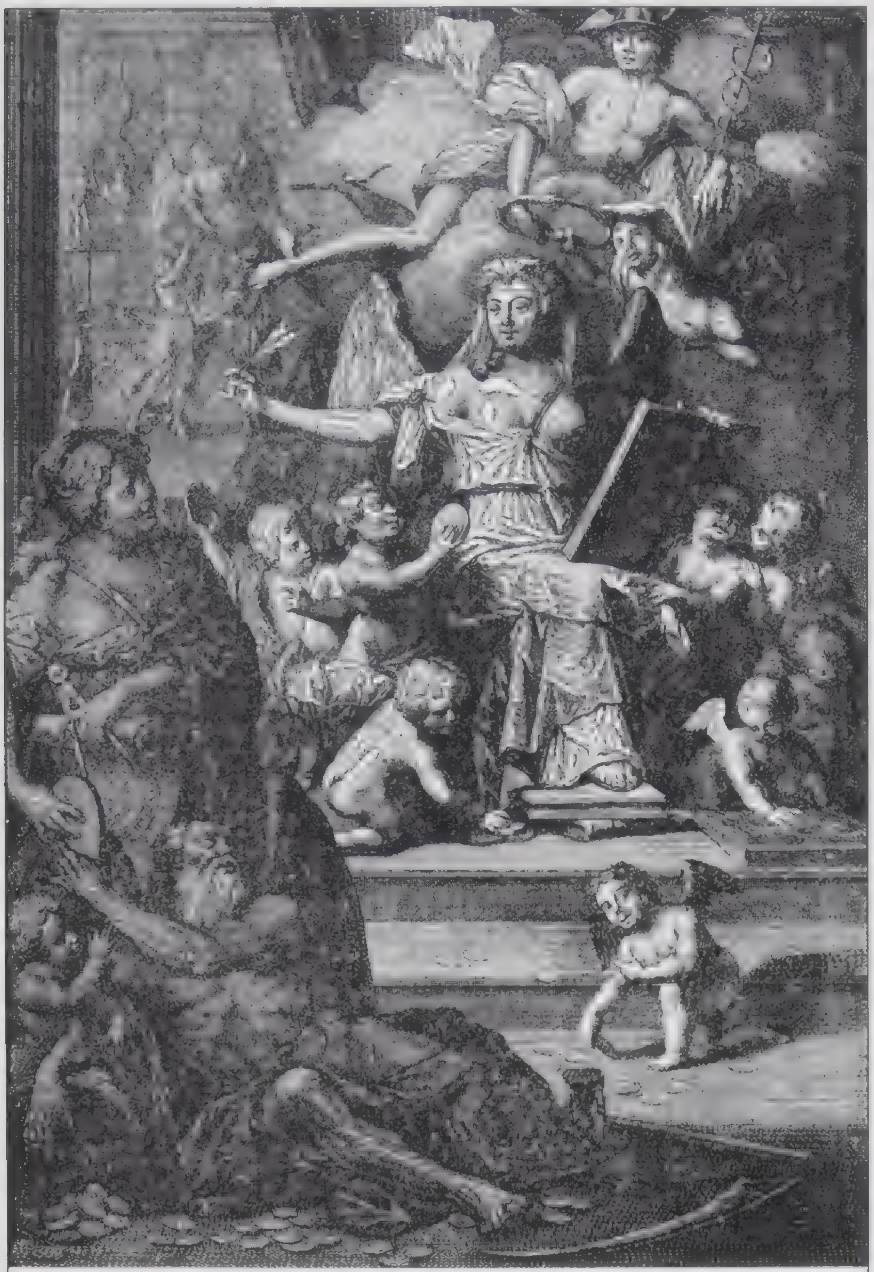
[1] Shanahan was unaware that, under Treasury Department contract, the U.S. Assay Office of Gold issued $50 coins in 1851-2.



Certain critics may not have liked the classicism of the 1915 Panama-Pacific $50 coins, but numismatists have always enjoyed such things. This romantic-allegorical scene shows "Old Time" giving up his coins to "prove history's truth." (*Visitors Guide and History of the U.S. Mint, Philadelphia,* A.M. Smith, 1885)

larger meaning of the Exposition, its appeal to the intellect." Daniel Chester French, chairman of the Commission of Fine Arts, was enthusiastic concerning Aitken's designs as well as those submitted by others for the lower denominations and recommended that the Treasury go ahead with the production.

Concerning the original design for the $50 coin, Secretary of the Treasury William Gibbs McAdoo had the following to say:

> The design of the $50 gold piece was appropriate enough in the Greek coin from which it is evidently copied. The head of Pallas and the owl, sacred to her, conveyed some meaning on that coin, but none, so far as I can see, in the present instance, except as the head of Pallas may be identified with that of our own Goddess of Liberty.
>
> This spider-web is not accepted today as a symbol of industry, if that was the artist's meaning, but the contrary; and the miniature dolphins floating in the air in front of Minerva's face seem to be very inappropriate. So too, does the legend "In God We Trust-1915" on the rim of Minerva's shield.

Other critics jested by saying that the dolphin design suggested that the Panama Canal had been constructed for the convenience of these aquatic mammals.

However, William Malburn, assistant secretary of the Treasury, was determined that all designs should be prepared by the Engraving Department at the Philadelphia Mint, undoubtedly a sentiment encouraged by Chief Engraver Charles E. Barber. Within the next month Barber was asked to furnish ideas for the $50 piece, but before much was done on this, Robert Aitken deleted the spider web from his early design and made a few other changes to the satisfaction of McAdoo.

The *AJN* Critique

The 1916 volume of the *American Journal of Numismatics*, the American Numismatic Society publication which had long since been eclipsed by *The Numismatist* in terms of popularity and timely reporting, reviewed the Panama-Pacific coins of the preceding year, noting that in creating the $50 pieces in round and octagonal form:

> The artist had really two important American events to draw upon and a coin with an unusually large field in which to elaborate a composition. But the types of the coin reveal no American influence, the subjects being as appropriate for any other country and event as for California or the United States of America and the completion of the Panama Canal. The criticism often heard that 'there is nothing American about the coin except the inscription' is fully warranted, for the artist, instead of working out a specially American theme, drew from the vast armory of classical symbolism and presented a really fine Athena bust as typical of the industry, and a capi-

> tal representation of Athena's owl as a symbol of the wisdom that built the canal.
>
> So many have inveighed against the medallist's too frequent resort to the now commonplace classical symbolism—a weakness of which the art is happily working free—that to discuss the subject here would be running the risk of repeating what others have said. Without doubt classical subjects commend themselves as appropriate to the few of academic culture and taste, and yet the majority of people, and including, too, the majority of the cultivated, cannot but entertain the feeling that coins specially issued on the occasion celebrating one of the nation's greatest achievements should have borne types having a distinct reference to our national history and national spirit.

The same reviewer went on to say that other pieces in the series deserved somewhat less criticism than the $50 pieces, and some of them no criticism at all.

Regarding "commonplace classical symbolism," the reviewer for the *American Journal of Numismatics* was in the minority in his disfavor, and in 1916 when the classically-based silver Mercury dime, Standing Liberty quarter, and Liberty Walking half dollar made their debut, they were nearly universally acclaimed.

Later in the twentieth century, numismatists, tired of the long-running Lincoln cent, Jefferson nickel, and Roosevelt dime designs yearned for a return to classicism!

Returning for a moment to the 1915-S Panama-Pacific $50, perhaps the last word in a numismatic sense was given by numismatic scholar and art historian Cornelius Vermeule:[1]

> Robert Aitken tried to create modern, pseudo-Athenian coins, in an idiom of archaeological classicism popular among many American sculptors trained partly at the American Academy in Rome before and after the First World War. His ideas were laudable.
>
> There were a minimum of inscriptions, classic Greco-Egyptian profile of Athena in full panoply, the date in Roman numerals, and a naturalistic owl in a mass of western pine cones. Dolphins fill the corners of the octagonals....
>
> In an overall view, the arresting feature of the giant gold coins was their archaistic treatment of details and relief. Athena's crest, wreath, curls, and aegis imitate the work of an ancient bronze. The bead and reel between the outside rims comes from Greek architecture, and a form of the lettering around the rim recalls Roman sestertii of the Empire or papal medallions of the Cinquecento.
>
> These coins were a *tour de force,* dated to be sure, but unusual enough in all respects to be worthy of what American numismatic art could achieve when creativity and Mint technique worked in unison.

Numismatic Sidelights

My file of B. Max Mehl-iana (as you can gather by now, I have files on lots of things) includes information that the Texas dealer went to California on multiple occasions, typically traveling by rail. Among his visits to the Golden State was that of August 30 through September 1, 1915, to attend the American Numismatic Association's annual convention, held in San Francisco so that participants could also attend the Panama-Pacific International Exposition then in progress and become acquainted first-hand with the commemorative coins discussed in the preceding paragraphs.

I don't know the reasons, and perhaps its distant location from the East and Midwest (where most members lived) was a factor, but, somehow, the coin conclave turned into a first-class flop. The attendance was lower than any other ANA show, before or since. Neither the president nor the vice-president of the Association showed up. The *entire list* of attendees is given herewith—small in numbers, but a gathering of numismatic eagles, for whom I give a few biographical details for your possible interest:

H.O. Granberg

Granberg was an Oshkosh, Wisconsin, numismatist who collected coins and also dealt in them on the side, although his main activity was real estate and mining. In the summer of 1914 he was injured in one of his mines in Colorado, when he was knocked off balance by a disengaged pulley belt and was flung into a 16-foot pit, causing serious injuries including breaking one leg in two places. By August 1915 the 54-year-old Granberg had not fully recovered, and he walked with a cane.

Born in 1861, he became a coin collector relatively late in life, joining the ANA in March 1904, later becoming chairman of its Board of Governors. He pursued the hobby with zeal backed by a comfortable bank balance, and within a decade or so had purchased many of the most famous American rarities plus territorial gold, patterns, and coins in other specialties. In 1914 many of his showpieces were put on view at the American Numismatic Society's Exhibition of United States and Colonial Coins. He consigned to several auction sales, but it seems that no sooner would he sell one collection, but he would build another—a real horse trader, so to speak. B. Max Mehl sold a portion of his U.S. material July 14, 1913. It consisted of almost a complete series of gold coins, three-dollar pieces and under, copper and silver coins, and fractional currency. The sale offered numerous rarities, the most outstanding being the trade dollars of 1884 and 1885 and the William K. Idler specimen of the 1804 dollar.

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[1] *Numismatic Art in America,* 1971, p. 136.

His numismatic flame burned out about 1917, or at least diminished. No longer was he a figure to contend with at auction sales, no longer was he active in the administration of the ANA (although he remained a member until his death in 1947). In the "what might have been" department, at one time H.O. Granberg contacted Theophile E. Leon, the "runner" and "point man" for Chicago super-collector Virgil M. Brand, and proposed that he become a partner in the coin business and open a retail store. Leon declined.

Fred Huddart

A resident of San Francisco, and an ANA member since 1911, Huddart loved the coins of early California. He acquired many if not most of the pioneer gold rarities held by the Society of California Pioneers, which, in turn, had acquired them from the Spiers Collection (later, many of the prime rarities were sold into the John Work Garrett Collection, to be auctioned by the writer for The Johns Hopkins University, 1979-1981).

Farran Zerbe

Zerbe, a numismatic showman who could have taught P.T. Barnum a few tricks, was in charge of the coin concession at the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition and had been a collector since 1883, when he happened upon a particularly curious nickel (see Adventure No. 19).

I. Leland Steinman

Steinman did not have to travel far to attend the ANA Convention, which was headquartered at the Stewart Hotel. His office was in the Hooker & Lent Building in the same city. In 1916 he tossed his hat in the ring for election as ANA second vice-president, but garnered only 70 votes to winner D.A. Williams' 116. In June 1916 his article, "Albert Küner, Engraver," was published in *The Numismatist*.

Dr. and Mrs. J.M. Henderson

Dr. Henderson, a Columbus, Ohio dentist, joined the ANA in the summer of 1903 and remained active for several decades thereafter. As the years progressed, his interests changed, and new areas of challenge were found. In 1906 he sought to buy copper cents of 1799 and 1804 and, apparently fresh into the specialty, most half dollars of the early nineteenth century. By 1917 he was chasing Civil War tokens and obsolete paper money from Ohio. In 1907 the ANA convention was held in Columbus, and he helped with the arrangements.

In 1909 he was front row center in a bitter contest against Frank C. Higgins for the ANA presidency. Higgins, president of the recently-formed New York Numismatic Club, squared off against Henderson via a vitriolic campaign of letter-writing and brochure distribution. Friends were pitted against friends, as each candidate tried to get their proxies to be used in the somewhat distant venue of Montreal, where the ballots would be counted during the annual convention. Although the truth will never be known, somehow Henderson gathered an incredible 447 proxies, including some from "members" whose normal dues had not been paid. In contrast, Higgins showed only a dismal 34 votes. The bitterness was the first in a rather unsavory series of ANA political "situations" and deeply scarred the organization for years to come. Disgusted with the Association, Virgil M. Brand, America's most active collector at the time (in terms of money spent, coins bought), resigned.

Years later Henderson became a coin dealer of sorts and conducted several sales in connection with club and society meetings, including the 1938 ANA convention sale.

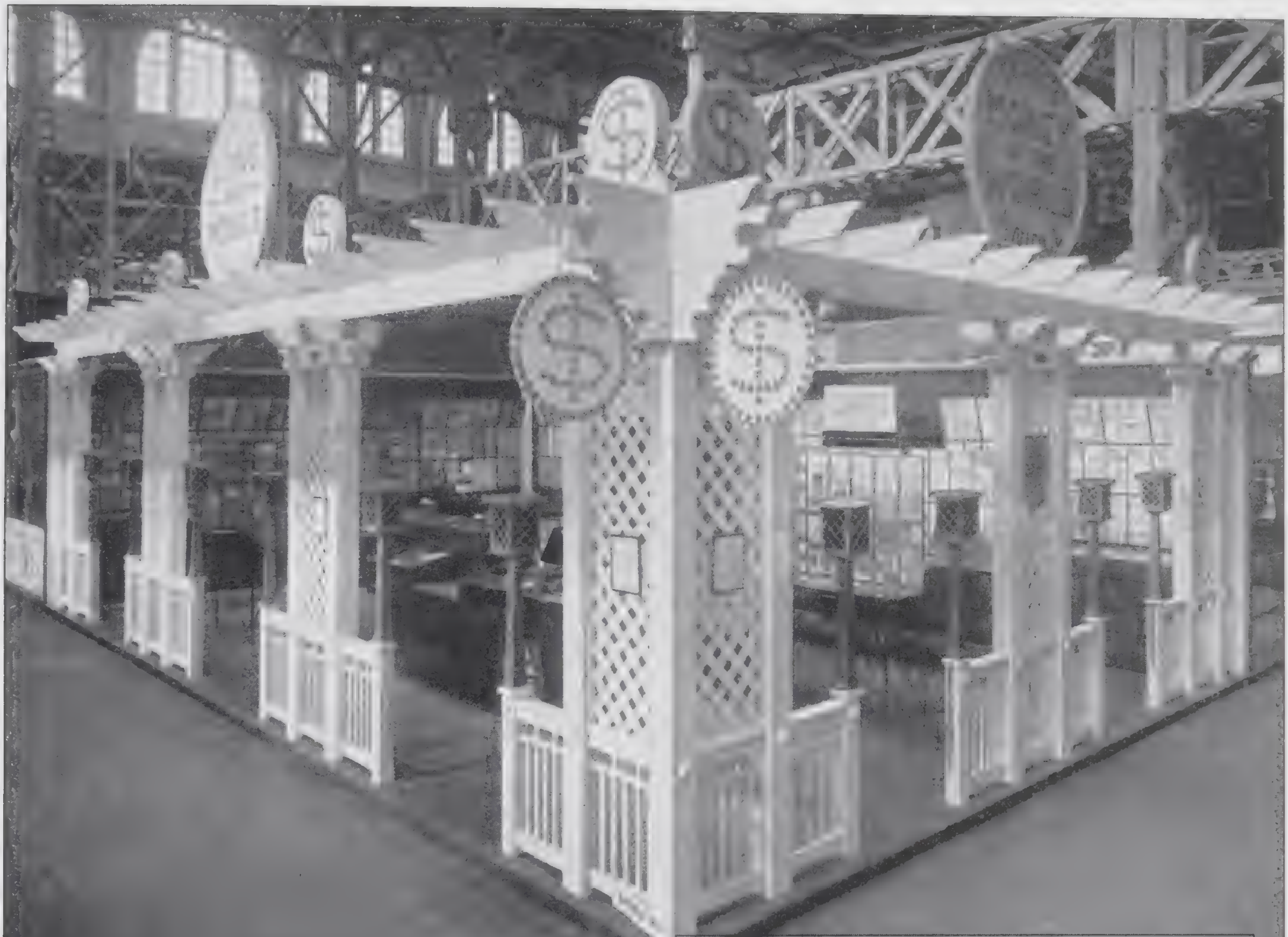
F.J. Loer

Loer, who lived in Chicago, had been collecting for the best part of a decade. On May 13, 1910, his collection was auctioned in that city by Ben G. Green. True to the form of anyone bitten by the "coin bug," he set about building another collection. His interest endured for many years.

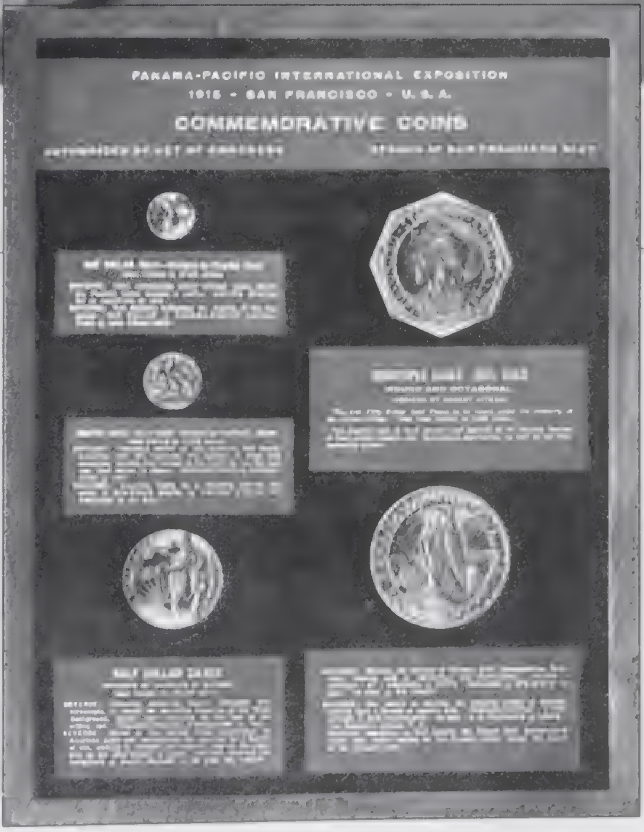
In 1918 he was one of a few hardy souls who showed up at the Hotel Stenton in Philadelphia, where the ANA convention was supposed to be held. However, the Spanish flu was sweeping America at the time, infecting millions and killing thousands, and in Philadelphia public gatherings were forbidden. Nevertheless, camaraderie was enjoyed by those collectors who came.

George C. Arnold

Arnold, along with A. Reimers, was one of the numismatic old-timers at the 1915 ANA Convention. In the 1880s he operated a coin and curiosity store at 165 Broadway, Providence, Rhode Island, and, among other places, advertised in *The Curiosity World*.



Scene from the Exposition: Illustration of Farran Zerbe's Money of the World exhibition, located within the Palace of Fine Arts, San Francisco, 1915. (From Frank Norton Todd's *The Story of the Exposition*, 1921)


PANAMA-PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION
1915 · SAN FRANCISCO · U. S. A.
COMMEMORATIVE COINS

Frame displaying a complete set of coins from the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition. (From Frank Norton Todd's *The Story of the Exposition*, 1921)

He remained in the coin trade for decades thereafter, mainly trading as the Arnold Numismatic Company. He liked to buy coins in bulk and at one time or another had tens of thousands of large copper cents, thousands of 1893 Isabella quarters, and over a thousand 1900 Lafayette dollars, to give just a short list.

Although he is not remembered as a numismatic writer, Arnold's article, "Connecticut Colonial Coins," was published in *The Numismatist* in October 1927.

Arthur C. Nygren

Nygren, who lived in San Francisco, loved coins and had a budget sufficient to buy most of what interested him. Early in the twentieth century he set about forming a set of Morgan silver dollars by date and mint—this at a time when few others were interested in the branch mint issues, but simply collected Proofs by date. By the time that B. Max Mehl auctioned his collection, November 30, 1914, he had tracked down most varieties, including the extremely rare 1886-S, but he had not been able to find the very rarest of all, the 1889-S (the 1903-O, discussed as Adventure No. 8, was an ultra rarity as well at the time).

True to the spirit of numismatics, Nygren continued to collect other series, and by April 29, 1924, when his estate holdings were auctioned by Henry Chapman under the title of *The Splendid Collection of Pioneer Gold Coins, U.S. Postage and Revenue Stamps, Sweedish [sic] Coins and Books Formed by the Late A.C. Nygren*, his pioneer gold coins can best be described as *fantastic.*

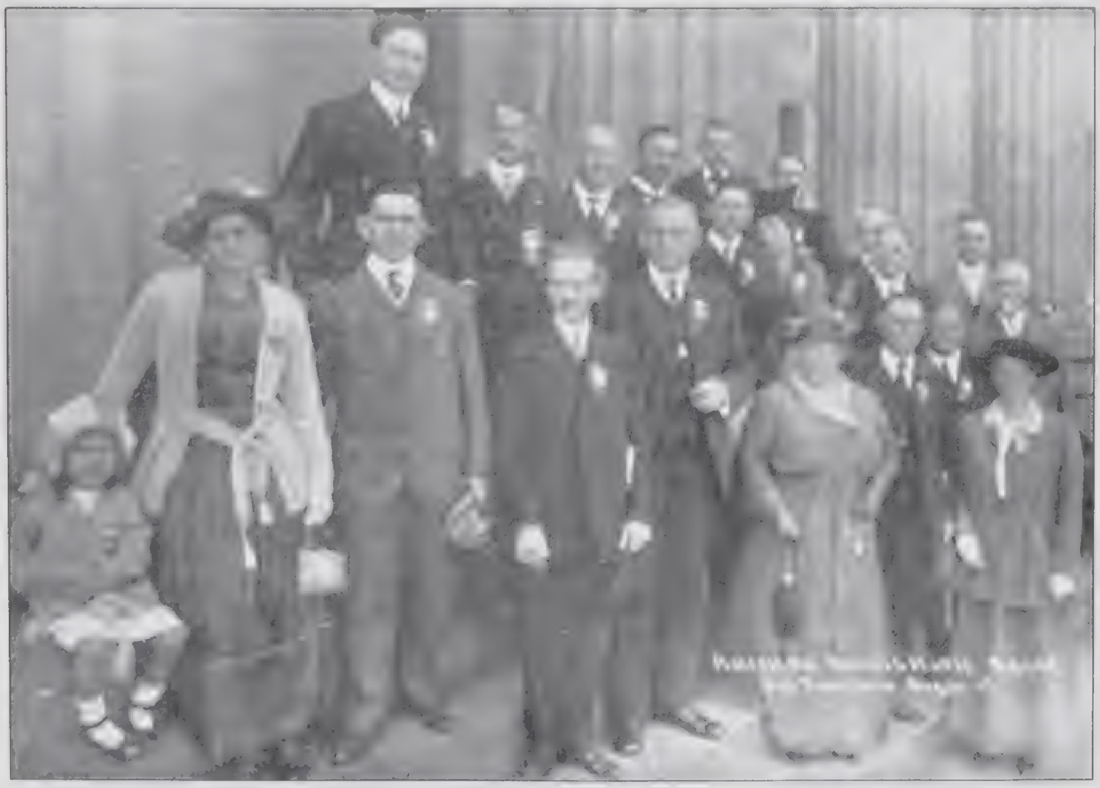
Mr. and Mrs. B. Max Mehl

B. Max Mehl was a coin dealer extraordinaire, including activities as auctioneer (mail bid sales only), promoter of numismatics, and publicist who shared his infectious enthusiasm for the 1913 Liberty Head nickel, 1804 silver dollar, and other rarities.

He began business in 1903 and was an *éminence grise* until his passing in 1957. Early in his career he was inspired by William von Bergen, who in the 1890s operated the Numismatic Bank in Boston and issued premium guides to the public; Mehl later became famous for *his* premium guides and had as one of his trade styles the Numismatic Bank of Texas. This sketch is about 1/1000th of 1% of what could be written about him.

A. Reimers

Reimers, a California gold enthusiast in the vein of Huddart, was a close friend of the latter. He was in the coin game for many years, and way back on Septem-



San Francisco Convention Photograph, August 30-September 1, 1915.

Front row (left to right)—Little Miss Mehl, Mrs. B. Max Mehl, B. Max Mehl, Former President Farran Zerbe; T.W.H. Shanahan, Supt. San Francisco Mint; Mrs. E.H. Adams, H.O. Granberg, E.H. Adams, Mrs. Albert H. Doyle.

Middle row—Arthur C. Nygren, Mrs. J.M. Henderson, Fred Joy, Former President Dr. J.M. Henderson, Albert H. Doyle, F.J. Loer.

Back row—A. Leland Steinman, Geo. C. Arnold, Fred T. Huddart, H.L. Hill, A. Reimers, R.B. Moore. (*The Numismatist*, October 1915)

ber 17, 1880, certain of his coins were auctioned by Édouard Frossard; 806 lots which realized $853.75. In 1881 he was a coin dealer and collector in San Francisco at 526 Post Street, advertising: "Fine and rare modern coins, siege pieces, and coins of necessity."

In *The Numismatist*, May 1906, J.C. Lighthouse, a Rochester, New York collector of importance, told of his experience during the San Francisco earthquake in April, a narrative which included some names among the present sketches:

"Mr. Farran Zerbe, on his way home from the Portland fair, stopped off in Frisco; I met him and we were together quite often looking at coins, etc., in fact nearly every day. On April 14th Mr. Zerbe, A. Reimers, and I went to the U.S. Mint and examined the coins of the Pioneer Society on exhibit there. We spent a half day there; we examined the 1804 dollar, which I claim is a cast. Mr. Zerbe considers it to be altered. Mr. Reimers agrees with me. Mr. Zerbe said he had heard so much of my fine collection of ancient Greek and Roman coins, also that I had as a whole one of the finest collections in this country. He expressed a desire to inspect the same. Since it was in San Francisco, Reimers, too, expressed the same desire. I told the gentlemen I had it in a burglar and fireproof safe at the Palace of Art. We agreed to meet at my house on the next Monday at 1:00 and in the meantime I would get the coins that I had in the Palace of Art safe and get my Roman medals that were on exhibition there. I got them home; the gentlemen came and examined them and spent a very pleasant afternoon until 5:50 p.m. inspecting them. That was on April 16th. They went away, well paid for their visit.

"Next day, Tuesday, I did not take the coins and medals back for safekeeping, and on Wednesday at 5:15 a.m. the terrible earthquake came and with it the fire, one of the greatest disasters known to ancient or modern times.... Mr. Reimers is safe. I had a letter from him yesterday; he lost all his spare clothes and his collection of years gathering of printed matter relating to numismatics. We lost all our dishes, glassware and such as was breakable stuff, our house was about ruined (a new house, too). I lost some investments, but we are thankful because we escaped with our lives. I saved all my coins and medals, and it was because of the engagement of Messrs. Reimers and Zerbe that I saved them. The fire and burglar-proof safes that had contained my ancient Greek and Roman coins and my Roman medals were totally destroyed, not a thing was saved out of those safes."

Years later, July 25-27, 1922, certain of Reimers' coins were auctioned by Henry Chapman.

Edgar H. Adams

Without question, Adams was the pre-eminent American numismatic scholar at the time, basking in the glory of his recent book on California gold coins, to which Messrs. Huddart, Reimers, and other San Franciscans had contributed. Much has been written about him in my various books and other publications, and in the present text I will simply quote his report on the aforementioned 1915 ANA convention:[1] Under the title "Convention Notes," Edgar H. Adams touched on a number of topics relating to the event:

> The most interesting single feature of the convention was the visit of the ANA members to the United States Mint. The party gathered at the building, on 5th and Mission streets, on Tuesday morning at 11 o'clock, and were greeted by Superintendent Shanahan, Chief Coiner Kearny, and others who did everything in their power to make the visitors feel at home.
>
> After the photograph had been taken on the steps of the building the party started for an inspection of the Mint, personally conducted by Superintendent [T.W.H.] Shanahan, who was accompanied by a number of his assistants. Superintendent Shanahan extended every facility to our members to get the best possible information regarding the detailed operation of this great money-making plant, and the chains which ordinarily prevent the usual visitor from getting too close to the various machines and their operators were withdrawn in the case of the ANA party, who were thus enabled to examine closely the progress of each step in the making of a coin and to obtain satisfactory explanations from those in charge.
>
> Superintendent Shanahan first had a real "gold brick," of a value approximate to $8,000, brought out and handed to the party to enable them to get an idea of the character and weight of such a piece of the precious metal. Then he showed a very large ingot of gold, which had an actual value of $40,000, the weight of which was almost beyond the strength of an ordinary person to carry.[2] The striking of a large order of copper-nickel one-centavo pieces for the Philippines was in progress, and those present had an opportunity to see just how these pieces were made. The bar of metal was first introduced in a rolling machine, which rolled it out to a certain thickness; this was followed by its introduction to another machine, which rolled it to a still further reduced thickness, and so on until it became a long strip of shining metal. This was then transferred to the planchet-making machine, which cut something like 150 disks to the minute. The planchets were afterward passed through the various stages of annealing, milling,

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[1] *The Numismatist*, October 1915, under "Convention Notes."

[2] At a value of *pure* gold of $20.67 per Troy ounce, the ingot would have weighed slightly more than 161 pounds.

etc., until they reached the coining presses where they were quickly stamped between the powerful jaws of the machine and the finished coins dropped into a receptacle placed below, having all the appearance of gold pieces in their fresh, mint state.

In the gold melting room large quantities of Japanese gold pieces were being melted into huge gold bars, which are soon to be placed in the vaults, and against which gold certificates will be issued. This practice is made possible by a recent law which changed the former custom of stamping such gold into regular United States coins, and has caused a great saving and done away with much useless and costly work.

In order to give the visitors an idea of the contents of one of the vaults, Superintendent Shanahan opened the chief vault, into which the visitors entered, and found themselves surrounded by golden ingots with a total value of $158 million. This is supposed to be the largest deposit of a similar nature in one vault in the world. This sum by no means represents the total value of the contents of the branch mint, as Superintendent Shanahan estimated that at the present time his establishment contains coins and bullion valued at $304 million.

Superintendent Shanahan replied courteously to all questions regarding the operation of the mint, and through his efforts made this visit the most memorable in the history of an ANA Convention and elicited the liveliest gratitude of all those fortunate enough to be present....

On Sunday afternoon, August 29th, the members of the Reception Committee of the Pacific Coast Numismatic Society gave the visiting ANA members a very enjoyable automobile ride, which covered many points of interest, including Golden Gate Park, the Museum, the Cliff House, etc.

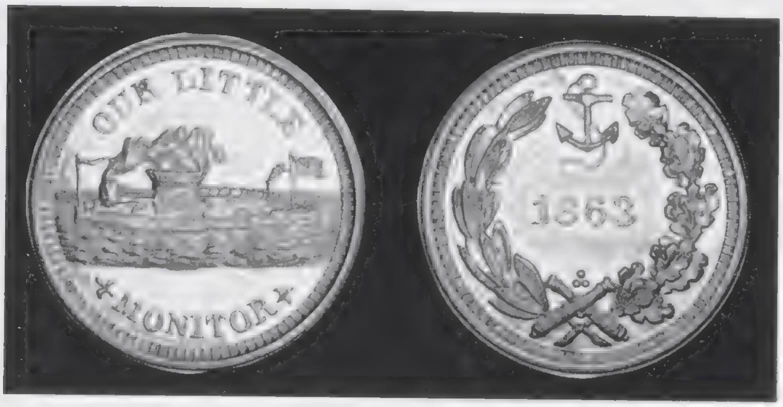
A party of the ANA members, composed of Dr. and Mrs. J.M. Henderson, Mr. and Mrs. E.H. Adams, and Messrs. Loer, Huddart, Zerbe, Arnold, and Granberg, made an enjoyable and extended trip to the Exposition on the last day of the convention. The Canadian Building was visited (and was unanimously proclaimed by the party to be the best single feature at the Exposition), then the buildings successively of Italy, France and Cuba, all of which contained interesting exhibits....

Mr. Zerbe's headquarters for the sale of the souvenir coins was located in the Liberal Arts Building, and was arranged in a very attractive manner. His personal collection of all sorts of money was displayed in such a way that it could be properly appreciated by the visitors. This was the Mecca of the visiting members, to whom Mr. Zerbe extended every courtesy. As a matter of fact, Mr. Zerbe deserves and has received the highest appreciation of everyone who had attended the 1915 convention for his uniform kindness and courtesy, which did a great deal to make the meeting a success.

There were no regular exhibits at the convention this year for the reason that an adequate place could not be secured. This was a disappointment to a number of those in attendance, who had brought pieces to be shown, but nevertheless the time and conditions would not permit a proper exhibit. An extra effort will be made to have the greatest exhibit at the Baltimore Convention in 1916 that is on record....

ADVENTURE NO. 43

"OUR LITTLE MONITOR" CIVIL WAR TOKEN



One of several varieties of Civil War tokens picturing the Union ironclad Monitor.

The *U.S.S. Monitor*

The *U.S.S. Monitor,* a low-profile ironclad ship with a rotating gun turret, was launched at Greenpoint, New York, on January 30, 1862. Humorously referred to as a "cheesebox on a raft" by some observers, the vessel was 178 feet long and had a beam of 41½ feet. On the deck was mounted a cylindrical turret of eight-inch armor plate. Measuring nine feet high, the rotatable turret had an inside diameter of 20 feet in which two 11-inch guns were mounted. The wheelhouse protruded four feet above the deck near the front of the ship. The draft was very shallow, with the result that the *Monitor* was very low in the water, and the decks were often awash.

On March 6, 1862, the *Monitor,* under tow, began a trip to Hampton Roads near the mouth of Chesapeake Bay. Lt. John Lorimer Worden commanded a crew of 58. Meanwhile, the Confederate equivalent, the ironclad *C.S.S. Virginia,* correctly called the *Merrimack* and popularly the *Merrimac,* was launched on March 5. The Confederate ship was much larger than the *Monitor,* carried a crew of 400 under Commodore Franklin Buchanan, and was armed with 10 guns. The *Merrimack* had a higher profile than the *Monitor* and had sloping sides so as to deflect incoming gunshots. She steamed into battle on March 8 and forthwith destroyed two wooden warships of the Union side and forced the frigate *Minnesota* to run aground. Clearly, a new era in naval warfare had been launched.[1]

Merrimack vs. *Monitor*

On the morning of the next day, the *Merrimack / Virginia* steamed out of port to demolish the stranded

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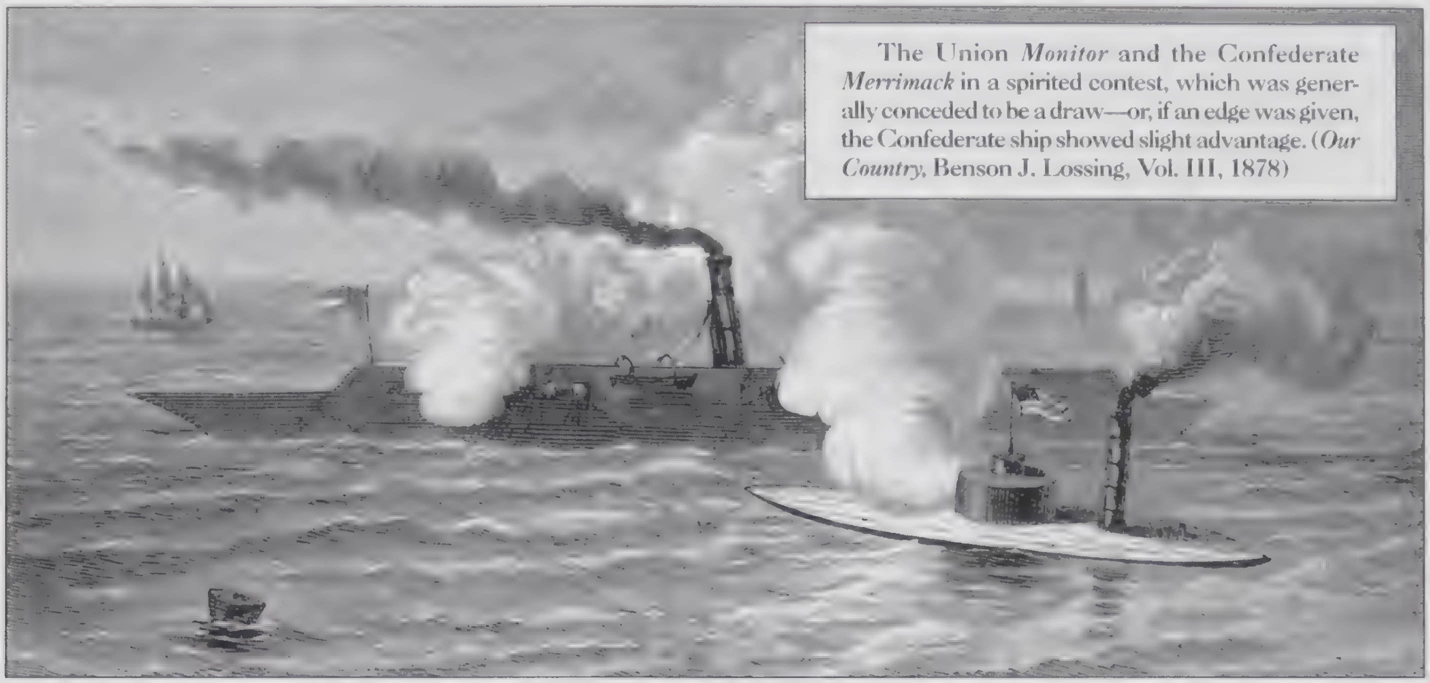
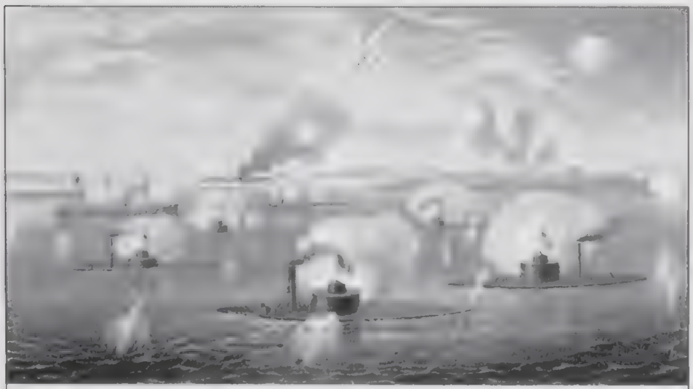
[1] The *Merrimack,* a Union steamer, was at the Norfolk, VA, Navy Yard when Virginia seceded from the Union on April 17, 1861. It was desired to evacuate the *Merrimack,* but her power plant was not in running order, and she was burned and scuttled to prevent capture. The Confederates raised the hull, repaired the engine, and outfitted her with sloping metal sides. The reborn ship was commissioned as the *C.S.S. Virginia* on March 8, 1862, but the *Merrimac* (with final k erroneously omitted) she remained to newspaper reporters and other Unionists who wrote about her, including during her famous encounter with the *Monitor.* The *Merrimack / Virginia* survived the battle, only to be burned by the Confederates when Norfolk was evacuated on May 11, 1862. After the Civil War, some tokens or medalets were made from salvaged armor plate of the vessel. For a time these were considered to be Civil War tokens, and highly prized as such (cf. Jack Detwiler, "Patriotic Patter," *JCWTS,* Fall 1974, pp. 67-69, which includes a discussion of both ironclads), but later, when it was realized that these were post-war souvenirs, interest flagged.



The Union *Monitor* and the Confederate *Merrimack* in a spirited contest, which was generally conceded to be a draw—or, if an edge was given, the Confederate ship showed slight advantage. (*Our Country*, Benson J. Lossing, Vol. III, 1878)

Minnesota and to sink any other ship that it might encounter. However, the *U.S.S. Monitor* had just arrived, and at 9 a.m. the two ironclads began to shoot at each other. The fusillade was kept up for about two hours, when the *Monitor* ran out of shells and withdrew to a supply ship to replenish its stores. Returning to the engagement, the *Monitor* soon sustained a direct hit on the pilot house. Lt. Worden was injured, and he ordered a retreat. The *Merrimack* remained on the scene awaiting the return of the *Monitor*. After a while it became evident that there would be no further contest, and the *Merrimack* returned to port. The battle had been fought to a draw, with, perhaps, the *Merrimack* gaining a slight edge.



The duel between the *Monitor* and the *Merrimack* ended the era of the wooden-hulled naval warship. The Union government ordered 10 more ships patterned after the *Monitor*, at 844 tons each, with each having a turret equipped with two guns of 11- and 15-inch calibers. Still later, seven more were ordered, these of 1,034 tons and mounting two 15-inch guns in their turrets. Other variations were built. Shown above is the federal attack on the defenses of Charleston, South Carolina, which involved eight *Monitor*-style warships. (*Eighty Years' Progress in the United States*, 1867)

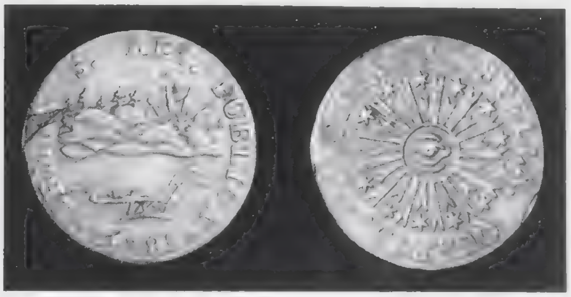
The *Monitor* vs. *Merrimack* shoot-out forever changed the style of fighting ships, and one-by-one, the old wood-sided vessels were sunk or retired. Also speeding the transition were steam-powered ships with protruding snouts made of wood, covered with iron, called *rams*. These would speed toward an enemy vessel and attempt to pierce its side. The Laird works in England built two rams for the Confederacy, but they were not delivered because of Union protests. Elsewhere, other rams were constructed and took their toll on Union shipping.

On December 31, 1862, while being towed south by the *S.S. Rhode Island* in the Atlantic off Cape Hatteras, NC, to enter her in battle, the *Monitor* sunk in high waves. Four officers and 12 other men perished, while 47 other crew members were transferred to the *Rhode Island*. In 1974 the Duke Marine Laboratory, of Duke University, located the hull of the *Monitor* in 220 feet of water some 15 miles to the south of the Cape Hatteras lighthouse. The wreck was found to be heavily rusted and too fragile for normal salvage operations.

As a symbol of what was wrongly called a Northern naval victory, and a sensational one at that, the *Monitor* became the ideal subject to depict on Civil War tokens of 1863 (plus one 1864 die). Today most such pieces are at once plentiful and inexpensive—an ideal numismatic link to one of the great episodes of the War Between the States.

ADVENTURE NO. 44

THE 1785 VERMONT "LANDSCAPE" COPPER



In 1785 and 1786 Reuben Harmon, Jr., struck coins under a franchise granted by Vermont. Produced at a rustic mint located on Millbrook, near Pawlet, the early issues depicted on the obverse a forested ridge—a vignette of a typical Vermont landscape.

Later, Harmon made an arrangement with Captain Thomas Machin, a Revolutionary War hero who operated a private mint near Newburgh, New York. At that location additional Vermont coppers were struck.

(Dr. Robert I. Hinkley Collection, Bowers and Merena Galleries, 2001, Lot 2288)

An Old Vermont Copper Coin

In 1859, Montroville W. Dickeson, M.D. saw the publication of his masterwork, *The American Numismatical Manual*, by J.B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia.[1] This large book, extensively illustrated, became immediately popular, and served as a catalyst for the expansion of the coin collecting hobby. Today, Dickeson is almost forgotten, except to the numismatists who care to query sellers of out-of-print books on rare coins. My library copy is quite tattered, but with its contents intact.

Dickeson had a way with words. His description of the design of the 1785-6 Vermont "landscape" type copper coins reads well today and, in fact, is almost poetic:

> Nothing could be more beautifully expressive than the device upon these coins. A supreme overruling power had truly cast the rays of approval upon the thirteen infant states of the American confederacy, in their contest for liberty and the just rights of humanity, against then, as now, leading power of the world [a reference to England]. The rays of Omnipotence protected them, and finally led them from vassalage to victory.
>
> "The reverse [what we call the obverse today] upon these coins is equally appropriate; the sun, emblematic of rising liberty, even beyond the distant mountains, and that implement of husbandry and emblem of peace—the plow—in the field beneath.
>
> Of the VERMONTS RES PUBLICA [inscription on the coin], 1785, there were two types and six varieties; the reflected rays on the obverse being in one pointed, and in the other obtuse; the device the same. The VERMONTENSIUM RES PUBLICA, but one type and no variety. This currency bears the unmis-

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[1] Certain phrases in this commentary are from the writer's "Joy of Collecting" column in *Coin World*, 1993, and the catalogue of the Robert Lindesmith Collection, 2000.

> takable impress of an American mind; it was well executed upon good copper, and also in an inferior metal. They are now quite valuable, because it is difficult to procure perfect specimens.

Reading the above, made me enthusiastic about Vermont coppers all over again! How could one not find even a well-worn piece to be charming and worth owning? I suspect that even the most dedicated admirer of modern coins certified as MS-65 would become excited about an old 1785 or 1786 copper coin of Vermont, after absorbing Dickeson's commentary.

Such is the power of words.

A Youthful Collector

I do not recall when I first discovered the field of Vermont copper coins, but it was probably around 1953 or 1954 during my reading of Sylvester S. Crosby's 1875 book, *The Early Coins of America*. At the time I did not own a copy of Dickeson—as just quoted—and thus I would learn of his sentiments later.

Around the same time I acquired an old copy of *The State Coinages of New England*, by Hillyer C. Ryder and Henry C. Miller, published by the American Numismatic Society, 1919. "Ryder numbers" were assigned to the copper coins of Vermont 1785-1788 and Massachusetts coins 1787-1788, while "Miller numbers" were given to the vast series (over 300 die varieties) of Connecticut coppers 1785-1788.

I quickly determined to collect each of these series, to the extent that I could afford them. Prices of Connecticut coppers in particular were very low. I recall that Art Kagin, who with his brother Paul ran the Hollinbeck Coin Company in Des Moines, sent me several boxes of Connecticut and other coppers, 1785-1788. These had been gathered over a period of 15 years or more and been set aside, as they had little value and the Kagins were not particularly interested in attributing die varieties. As I recall, I could have whatever I wanted for a few dollars per coin, but if during the course of attributing the pieces I found something rare, I was to let Art know, and make an appropriate offer.

By 1956, when I was a freshman at the Pennsylvania State University, I had a full fledged case of the "colonial coin bug." I simply had to know *everything* possible about them! The circle of friends of the copper issues included Ken Bressett (who especially liked Vermonts), Edward Barnsley (ditto; later, Ned, as he was known, gave me his notebook on Vermont coppers, which I still have), Ken Rendell (Vermont), Eric P. Newman (all series), Jim Ruddy (New Jersey copper coins 1786-1788, not New England coinages, but what the heck), and John J. Ford, Jr. (everything).

Then there was Walter Breen, who for a time collected Vermont coppers in a dilatory manner, preferring to gather *information*, rather than coins themselves. Breen, who was just becoming well known as a scholar, based upon his work with Wayte Raymond and the New Netherlands Coin Company (Charles M. Wormser and John J. Ford, Jr.) and his articles in the *Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine*, always lived from hand to mouth. If he made $100, it seemed that he spent $105. If he made $1,000, he spent $1,100. Thus, most of us who were Walter's friends and also much better managers of money, used to buy Walter lunches and dinners at conventions, and help with other of his expenses. Many collectors and dealers exploited Walter, by seeking him out to write letters of opinion or authentication which sometimes added hundreds of dollars to the value of a coin. Walter usually received little or nothing for such help. A businessman he was not.

While at Penn State I tried to learn more about the curious Machin's Mills mint, but apart from re-reading sources already covered by Crosby, I did not find much. Even today, there is not much else known about the operating history of this facility, other than what Crosby recited.

While there are many "adventures" among state coinages, I devote this section to Vermont coppers, as to me they were the most intriguing when I first learned about them in the 1950s. See what you think when you read the following, much if not most of which is from Crosby.

Authorizing the Vermont Coinage

On June 10, 1785, Reuben Harmon, Jr. of Rupert, Bennington County, petitioned the House of Representatives for permission to produce coinage for Vermont. A committee consisting of Messrs. Tichenor, Strong, and Williams, with the addition of Ira Allen from the Legislative Council, was formed to consider the proposal.

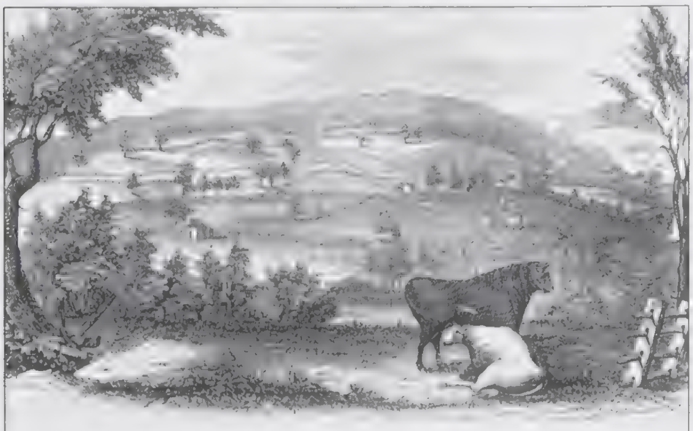
On June 15, 1785, a bill authorizing Harmon to coin copper pieces was sent to the governor and Council for their consideration and possible amendment:

> Whereas Reuben Harmon, Jr., Esq., of Rupert in the county of Bennington, by his petition has represented that he has purchased a quantity of copper suitable for coining, and praying this legislature to grant him a right to coin copper, under such regulations as this assembly shall think meet; and this assembly being willing to encourage an undertaking that promises so much public utility, therefore:

> Be it enacted and it is hereby enacted by the representatives of the freemen of the State of Vermont in general assembly met and by the authority of the same, that there by and hereby is granted to the said Reuben Harmon, Jr., Esq., the exclusive right of coining copper within this state for the term of two years from the first day of July, in the present year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-five; and all coppers by him coined shall be in pieces of one third of an ounce troy each, with such devices and mottoes as shall be agreed on by the committee appointed for that purpose by this assembly.
>
> And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid that the said Reuben Harmon before he enter on the business of coining, or take any benefit of this act, shall enter into a bond of five thousand pounds, to the treasurer of the state, with two or more good and sufficient sureties, freeholders of this state, conditioned that all the copper by him coined as aforesaid, shall be a full weight as specified in this act, and that the same shall be made of good and genuine metal.

The bill was passed on the same day. On June 16th the required financial bond was obtained. Harmon found that his coins, regulated to be the weight of one third ounce each, would be too heavy and would weigh more than contemporary pieces of halfpenny size circulating at that time throughout the United States. Accordingly, an amendment was passed on October 27, 1785, which stated:

> Be it enacted and it is hereby enacted by the representatives of the freemen of the State of Vermont in general assembly met, and by the authority of the same; that all coppers coined by said Reuben Harmon, Jr., Esq. shall be of genuine copper in pieces weighing not less than four pennyweight fifteen grains each, and so much of the aforesaid act that regulates the weight of said coins is hereby repealed.



The Bennington, Vermont, battleground of Revolutionary War fame as it appeared years later when sketched by historian Benson J. Lossing. Within a decade of the Battle of Bennington the first Vermont copper coins were struck. (*Pictorial Field Book of the American Revolution*)

With the authorization dated June 15, 1785, Vermont became the first of the several states to authorize its coinage, although, strictly speaking, Vermont was a separate entity until it joined the Union in 1791.

Debut of the Vermont Coins

Harmon set up a mill near the Pawlet River, and minting commenced. At that facility the 1785 "landscape" coppers were struck using copper of irregular surface quality. The reverse depicted an all-seeing eye and double-thickness or single rays, an imitation of the Nova Constellatio reverses.

The *Massachusetts Gazette,* Tuesday, April 1787, carried this item, datelined Providence, March 8, referring to the 1786-dated coins, but as contemporary citations are so rare, I quote it—as relevant also to the 1785 pieces (except that the "Vermontensium" spelling is unique to 1786):

> A new copper coinage has lately appeared.—On one side around this Latin inscription: "Vermontensium Respublica,[1] 1786" (*The State of Vermont, 1786)* encircling a representation of the great mountain, which divides that state from north to south, nearly in the middle, heretofore called the *Green Mountain*, from which it takes its name, *Vermont;* being compounded of two French words.—
>
> The lofty timber, for which that country is remarkable, is represented growing among the mountains, and from behind one of them the sun in its effulgent glory appears rising.—Beneath, in the open plain, is represented the Plough, as emblematical of the state.
>
> On the opposite side of the copper is a resplendent and full-illumined star, with the eye of beneficence in the centre, surrounded with thirteen other stars, on the outside whereof around the edge is this inscription:— "Quarta Decima Stella," [*the fourteenth star.*] The coinage is well executed; and the device is sentimental, ingenious and beautiful.

Harmon and His Mint

In his master work, *The Early Coins of America,* Sylvester S. Crosby quoted a letter from B.H. Hall of Troy, New York, to Charles I. Bushnell, of New York City, dated March 3, 1855, which gives a brief biography of Harmon and tells of the mint:

> Reuben Harmon, Jr. came from Suffield, Connecticut, in company with his father, Reuben Harmon, Sr., about the year 1768, and settled in the northeast part of Rupert, Vermont. He was a man of some note and influence while there.
>
> At a meeting of the inhabitants of the New Hampshire Grants held at Dorset, September 25, 1776, ini-

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[1] Actually, VERMONTENSIUM RES. PUBLICA.

In the 1850s Charles I. Bushnell, a New York numismatist and attorney, did much research on American colonial coins and tokens, but published very little. Years later certain of his notes passed to Sylvester S. Crosby, the Boston numismatist and watchmaker who wrote *The Early Coins of America.*

Shown above is the portrait of Bushnell as he appeared in 1859 as No. 1 in the nine-subject "Numismatic Gallery" token series, from dies by George H. Lovett, and published by Augustus B. Sage, New York City.

> tiatory to the Declaration of Independence. Reuben Harmon [probably Jr.], was one of the representatives from Rupert. He was representative in the Vermont Legislature from Rupert in 1780, was justice of the peace from 1780 to 1790, and held several minor offices.
>
> In the year 1790 or thereabouts he left Rupert, for that part of the State of Ohio called New Connecticut, and there died long since.
>
> His Mint House was located near the northeast corner of Rupert, a little east of the main road leading from Dorset to Pawlet, on a small stream of water called Millbrook, which empties into Pawlet River. It was a small building, about 16 by 18 feet, made of rough materials, sided with unplaned and unpainted boards. It is still standing, but its location and uses are entirely different from what they were originally. Its situation at present is on the border of the adjoining town of Pawlet whither it was long since removed, and what was once a coin house is now a corn house.
>
> Col. William Cooley, who had worked at the goldsmith's trade in the city of New York, and who afterwards moved to Rupert, made the dies and assisted in striking the coin.

The same correspondent wrote to Charles I. Bushnell on July 18, 1855, with additional information:

> The sun dial, or "Mind Your Business" copper coin, common in New England at the close of the last and at the commencement of the present century, was first manufactured by Abel Buell at New Haven, Connecticut, the original dies having been designed and cut by himself.
>
> Not long after this, his son William Buell, removed from the manufactory to the town of Rupert, Bennington County, Vermont, and in connection with a Mr. Harmon, established the mint house on what is now known as Millbrook. William had taken with him the original dies used by his father at New Haven, and continued at Rupert the coinage of the coppers above referred to, until the coin had depreciated so much in value as to be worthless or nearly so, for circulation.
>
> The remains of the dam which rendered the waters of Millbrook eligible are still to be seen, and pieces of copper and specimens of the old coin are still occasionally picked up on the site of the old mill and in the brook below.

It is not known today whether Fugio coppers, referred to as the "Mind Your Business copper coin" above, were actually struck in Vermont, for the act which authorized Reuben Harmon, Jr. to strike coins specifically delineated the type of coins to be struck and provided strong penalties if there were deviations from those authorized. Eric P. Newman, writing "A Recently Discovered Coin Solves a Vermont Numismatic Enigma" in *The Centennial Publication of the American Numismatic Society*, New York, 1958, stated that Buell brought with him punches and tools but not coining dies. Today, most students of copper coins of the 1780s agree, and do not believe that Fugio coppers were ever coined at the Pawlet facility.

Julian Harmon, the grandson of Reuben Harmon, Jr., shed some further light on the early Vermont coiners in a letter to Hall dated June 4, 1855. He believed that Reuben Harmon, Jr. came to Vermont about 1760, having moved from Sandisfield, Massachusetts. He verified that William Buell of New Haven cut the dies and stated:

The mint house stood on Pawlet River, three rods from [Reuben Harmon, Jr.'s] house, a story and a half house, not painted, a furnace in one end for melting copper and rolling the bars, and in the other [west] end machinery for stamping, and in the center that for cutting.

> The stamping was done by means of an iron screw attached to heavy timbers above and moved by hand through the aid of ropes. Sixty per minute *could* be stamped, although 30 per minute was the usual number. William Buell assisted in striking the coins. Three persons were required for the purpose, one to place the copper, and two to swing the stamp.
>
> At first, the coins passed two for a penny, then four, then eight, when it ceased to pay expenses. The British imported so many of the 'Bungtown coppers,' which were of a much lighter color.

Hall, in a letter to Charles I. Bushnell, dated June 14, 1856, gave still another view of the mint:

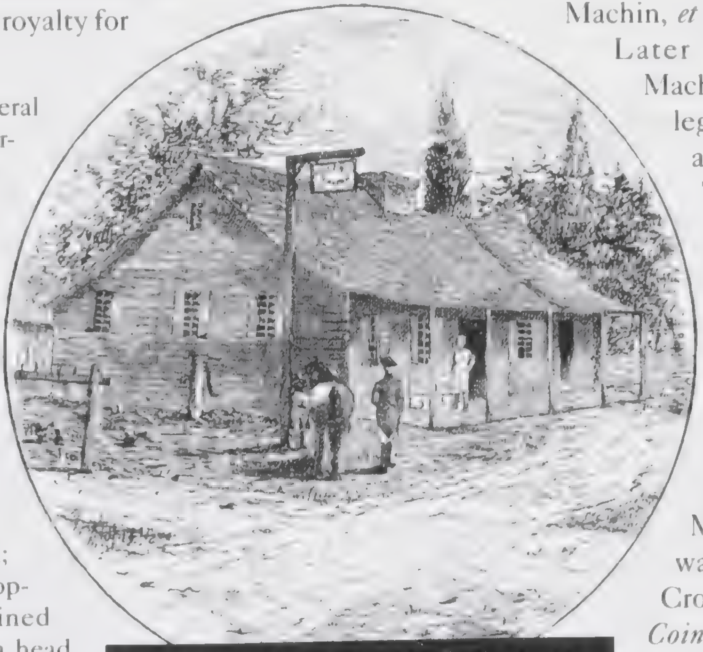
> On the north side of Millbrook the 'old copper house' was first erected. From this location, in the town of Rupert, the 'Mint House' was afterwards removed to and placed on the eastern bank of Pawlet River in the same town. Here it was also used for minting purposes.

> When the manufacture of coins was abolished, it was allowed to remain on Pawlet River for several years, but we could not learn to what uses it was put. Its third removal was to a spot north of the house of John Harwood, Esq., in the town of Rupert, on the east side of the main road. While here it was occupied as a residence by a family named Goff.
>
> It was again removed from its third location to a site nearly opposite, where it remained until its final journey which took place many years ago. This placed it on the farm of William Phelps about a mile north of John Harwood's residence in ‘the edge’ of the town of Pawlet. Here it stood until last winter, when it was blown down.

Franchise Renewed

The initial coining franchise was granted to Harmon for a period of two years. Before the expiration, Harmon, on October 23, 1786, petitioned the General Assembly to extend the term on the grounds that it was too short to indemnify him for the great expense of erecting a factory acquiring machinery, and otherwise beginning the coinage of copper. On October 24, 1786, the arrangement was extended. The design was officially modified, and following an initial period, Harmon was to pay a royalty for the coining privilege:

> Be it enacted by the General Assembly in the State of Vermont that there be and hereby is granted and confirmed to the said Reuben Harmon, Jr., Esq., the exclusive right of coining copper within the state, for a further term of eight years from the first day of July, 1787; and that all copper by him coined shall be in pieces weighing not less than four pennyweight, fifteen grains each; and that the device for all coppers by him hereafter coined shall be, on the one side, a head with the motto ‘Auctoritate Vermontensium’ abridged, and on the reverse a woman with the lettering INDE: ET LIB:, for “Independence and Liberty.”
>
> And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid that the said Reuben shall have and enjoy the aforesaid privilege of coining coppers within the state free from any duty to this state as a compensation therefore, for the full term of three years from the first day of July, 1787; and from and after the expiration of said three the said Reuben shall pay for the use of this state two and one-half percent of all the copper he shall coin for and during the remainder of aforesaid term of eight years.



A wayside tavern of 1791. No doubt many Vermont coppers, Machin's Mills coppers, and related pieces were spent here. (Portrait from *Perley's Reminiscences*, Vol. I, 1886)

Later, pieces with a stylized portrait of King George II (die varieties described by Hillyer C. Ryder as Ryder-10, 11, and 15, portrait not identified on the coin) were made as was the *Baby Head* (Ryder-9), again on poor copper. The devices were per the franchise extension of October 24, 1786. The portrait pieces illustrated a seated figure on the reverse and were stylistic copies of current British halfpence, the change possibly being made to make the Vermont coinage more familiar to the populace and to facilitate circulation of the pieces.

A complete set of known varieties of *native* Vermont coppers would include Ryder numbers 2-4, 6-11, and 15, the Ryder-15 being a transitional issue dated 1787. The others are believed to have been struck at Machin's Mills, as discussed below.

Transition to Machin's Mills

On June 7, 1787, Harmon cast his lot with the partners of Machin's Mills (Capt. Thomas Machin, *et al.*, Newburgh, New York). Later issues were struck from Machin's Mills dies with Vermont legends, and many were struck at Machin's Mills itself. These bore the undesignated portrait of King George III. Most of the later Vermont pieces as well as several irrelevant mulings (Ryder 1, 13, 31, and others) were made on thin, lightweight planchets.

The story of Machin's Mills is a fascinating one and was first told by Sylvester S. Crosby in his 1875 work, *Early Coins of America*. Later, it was been studied and sometimes elaborated upon by over a dozen interested numismatists, a roster of which includes (alphabetically) Anton, Barnsley, Betts, Bowers, Breen, Bressett, Crosby, Hall, Hodder, Kesse, Lindesmith, Newman, Richardson, Ryder, Spilman, Slafter, Taylor, Trudgen, *et al.*, this being far from a complete listing, but including some of the specialists through the early 1990s.

From the 1960s onward *The Colonial Newsletter* (founded by Al Hoch and continued for a long time by James C. Spilman, later passing to the American Numismatic Society), acted as a focal point, research forum, and bulletin board for research in the field.

In 1990 William T. Anton, Jr., and Bruce Kesse published *The Forgotten Coins of the North American Colonies. A Modern Survey of Early English and Irish Counterfeit Coppers Circulating in the Americas.* The text and illustrations focused upon Machin's Mills coinage and told of modern visits to the mint site. The collecting of Vermont coppers was given an impetus in 1998 with the publication of a new book, *The Copper Coins of Vermont and Those Bearing the Vermont Name,* by Tony Carlotto. Obviously, the circumstances of this long-ago enterprise have enduring interest and appeal!

About Machin and His Partners

Reuben Harmon, Jr., of Vermont, finding that coinage required more effort than he had anticipated, and that there had been many problems with it, sought to profit by, in effect, subcontracting his franchise. He entered into a partnership with entrepreneurs whose enterprise is remembered numismatically as "Machin's Mills."

Machin's Mills had been established by an agreement dated April 18, 1787, which united the interests of Samuel Atlee, James F. Atlee, David Brooks, James Grier, and James Giles, all of New York City, with Thomas Machin of Ulster County, New York. It was provided that the profits from the coining enterprise should be split six ways, directly in proportion to the original stock which consisted of 300 pounds of capital, split into six shares valued at 50 pounds each. It was stated that Samuel Atlee and James F. Atlee "being possessed of certain implements for carrying on said trade, do agree to lend them to the parties to these presents for and during the continuance of their copartnership without any fee or reward for the same."

On June 7, 1787, another agreement was drawn up, this one including Reuben Harmon, Jr., holder of the Vermont coining patent. Ten partners participated, including the original six involved in the Machin's Mills enterprise, plus four others: Reuben Harmon, Jr.; William Coley (or Cooley), also of Vermont; Elias Jackson of Litchfield County, Connecticut; and Daniel Van Voorhis, a New York City goldsmith (who also produced items for the Indian trade, not related to the Vermont coinage).

It was noted in the revised agreement that Reuben Harmon, after obtaining the coinage privilege from the legislature of Vermont, had taken in William Coley, Elias Jackson and Daniel Van Voorhis as equal partners. Now it was intended to merge the interests of Machin's Mills with those of the Rupert, Vermont minters. It was proposed that coinage be conducted in two locations: Machin's Mills, then in the process of readying for coinage, and at Rupert, Vermont in the existing facilities there. Duties were divided among the various partners, with due provision being made for audits, settling accounts, and other business necessities. It seems likely that once production of Vermont coppers commenced at Machin's Mills, little further was done in Vermont itself. The only 1787-dated Vermont copper attributable to the Green Mountain State is Ryder-15 (Mailed Bust left), which seems to have been made in very small quantities, for it is a notable rarity today.

Description of Machin's Mills

Machin's Mills was located on Orange Lake, which at one time was also called Machin's Pond. A new outlet, which provided water to a large extent for Chambers' Creek, was tapped, and at the outlet the minting structure was erected. Originally this outlet was an overflow for times of high water, the natural one being further west at a place called Pine Point.

Charles I. Bushnell notified Sylvester S. Crosby:

> The mint house at Newburgh, Ulster County, New York, was situated on the east side of Machin's Lake or Pond, about one eighth of a mile distant from the pond. The building was erected in 1784 by Thomas Machin, and was still standing in 1792, at which time the rollers, press, and cutting machine were taken out.
>
> The coins were struck by means of a large bar loaded at each end with a 500-pound ball with ropes attached. Two men were required on each side, making four in all to strike the pieces, besides the man to set the planchets. The metal of which the coins were struck was composed of old brass cannons and mortars, the zinc from the copper being extracted by smelting in a furnace. About 60 of the coins were struck a minute.
>
> The sloop *Newburgh* (Capt. Isaac Belknap) carried for a number of years the coining press as part ballast. The coins were made by James F. Atlee. Many of them bore on the obverse GEORGIUS III, and on the reverse INDE ET LIB. Others bore the figure of a plough on one side. The mint ceased operations in the year 1791.

Captain Machin

That Captain Thomas Machin had an inventive turn of mind there can be no doubt. Although numismatists remember him for coinage, he is also prominent in the annals of Revolutionary War history.

Born March 20 (old calendar), 1744, near Wolverhampton, Staffordshire, England, Thomas Machin was one of two sons (the other, John, Jr.) of John Machin, well-known as a mathematician. As a young man, Thomas was employed to work on a canal near Liverpool, and in the process gained familiarity with engineering principles, a knowledge that would play a role in his future.

He left England in 1772 and headed for America. Upon his arrival he resided in New York City, from which location he traveled to New Jersey to inspect a copper mine. He then moved to Boston and participated in the celebrated "Boston Tea Party" in 1773 to protest British taxes perceived by the colonists as being unfair. At the battle of Bunker Hill, 1775, he fought as a lieutenant for the American side and was wounded in one arm. On January 18, 1776, he received a commission as second lieutenant in a regiment of artillery commanded by Col. Henry Knox. Machin was tapped as engineer to lay out fortifications for the defense of Boston harbor and the city.

In 1777 and 1778, Machin, now a captain, supervised the stretching of a chain across the Hudson River at West Point to prevent British ships from going upstream to Albany. This was a remarkable engineering project and involved the making of huge, heavy chain links and supporting them on small barges spaced across the waterway. By the early nineteenth century, a monument to this enterprise had been set up at West Point and included a cannon and links of the famous chain.

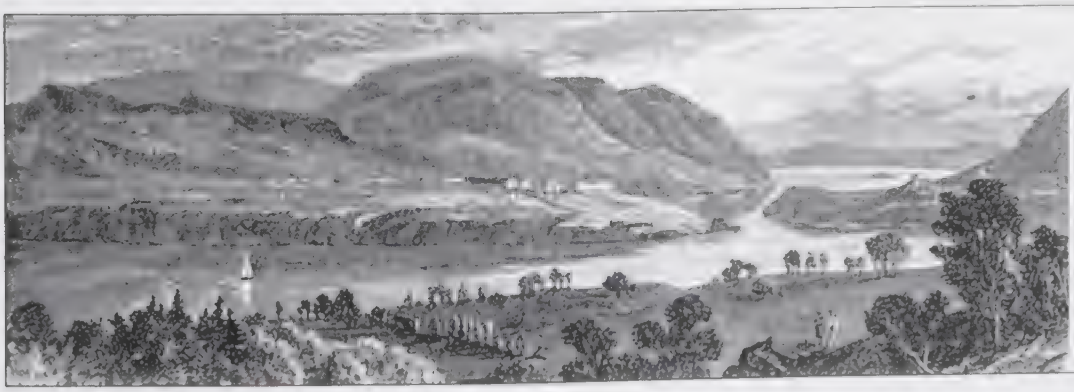
Writing in the *History of Schoharie County and Border Wars of New York*, 1845, Jeptha R. Simms stated that Machin received many of his instructions personally from George Clinton (who was memorialized on a 1787 copper bearing his portrait on the obverse; in the 1860s a copy was made by James A. Bolen). For many years George Clinton was prominent in the affairs of New York state.

In October 1777, another Clinton—Sir Henry Clinton of the British forces—sailed up the Hudson River and stormed Forts Montgomery and Clinton on the west bank, six miles below West Point. On the attack of Fort Clinton, Captain Machin was in charge of a large gun which wrought much destruction on the enemy. Shortly thereafter he sustained a bullet wound when a ball (per Simms) entered his breast and came out under his right shoulder. While recovering, Machin was entertained at the home of Governor Clinton.

By early December he was sufficiently recovered that he could resume his duties. The chain across the Hudson River had been completed earlier, in the spring of 1777. Captain Machin also worked in 1777 to help erect fortifications. 135 tons of iron were used for the chain and attendant booms, clips, swivels, etc., at a cost of $14,869.89. The iron was obtained from Sterling and Long mines in Orange County, New York. The links weighed between 100-150 pounds each, and the entire weighed 186 tons. The Sterling iron works was situated 25 miles back of West Point and was in operation from about 1750. The chains were forged there, and carted in sections to West Point. Every autumn the chain was taken on shore by a windlass, and the floats were taken out, to be replaced early in the spring. It crossed the river just above West Point to Constitution Island, about 1500 feet. Work took place late in the winter of 1776 and early 1777. This chain proved ineffective and was breached by British forces under Sir Henry Clinton. In the following year a sturdier version was put in place and effectively halted the opposition forces who were never able to mount an effective challenge to it.

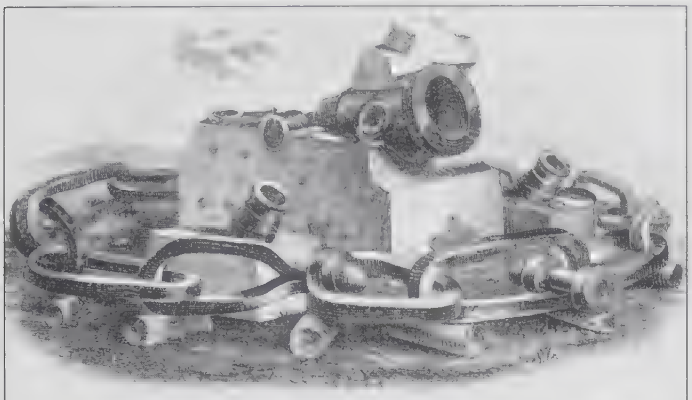
In May 1779, Machin was involved in the design of an aqueduct and a reservoir between Albany and Schenectady. In 1779 he took part in Sullivan's expedition, later drawing a map of the route and places of encounter. In 1781 he was in the recruiting service at New Windsor, later in the same year assisting with the fortifications and siege of Yorktown.

A letter from New Windsor, August 10, 1782, addressed to Oliver Wendell, Esquire, Boston, stated



Vista of the Hudson River, circa 1780, with West Point on the distant shore. (*Our First Century, Great and Memorable Events*) that Machin was engaged to a young lady in New York:

> The day for our union was set, we both, I am led to believe, with equal anxiety of that happy period, in which I think two feeling souls would have been happily united in the honorable bonds of Hymen.
>
> But to my great mortification, somebody was pleased to inform the young lady's friends that I had a wife in Boston. And, as I always did, and hope I ever will, detest deception…



By the late 1840s, when Benson J. Lossing sketched the display above, 12 links of Machin's chain still survived and were displayed at West Point. "The links are made of iron bars, two and a half inches square, and in length a little over two feet, and weigh about 140 pounds each. The chain was stretched across the river at the narrowest point between the rocks just below the steamboat landing [of the 1840s] and Constitution Island opposite....

"The iron of which this chain was constructed was wrought from ore of equal parts, from the Burling and Long Mines, in Orange County. The chain was manufactured by Peter Townshend, of Chester, at the Stirling Iron Works, in the same county, which is situated about 25 miles back of West Point. The general superintendent of the work, as engineer, was Captain Thomas Machin, who afterward assisted in the engineering operations at Yorktown, where Cornwallis was captured. The chain was completed about the middle of April, 1778, and on the 1st of May it was stretched across the river and secured."

The project had taken about six weeks to complete, with the individual links being brought by teamsters to West Point as they were completed. The entire chain, which weighed 180 tons, was buoyed up by many large logs, each about 16 feet long and with pointed ends to lessen the resistance at flood and ebb tides, for this part of the Hudson was nearly at sea level. (Lossing, *Field-Guide to the Revolution*, Vol. I)

Actually, there were *two* chains. The first, stretched across the river in spring 1777, proved unequal to the task, having been destroyed by the British under Henry Clinton. The heavier chain of 1778 performed effectively. For the next several years this cumbersome linkage and its floats or booms were removed for the winter, to avoid destruction by ice floes, and repositioned the following spring.

Machin requested that, "relying on our former friendship and your justice, make no doubt that you will give the bearer, Dunning, the young lady's and my friend, whatever information he may require relating to my conduct while in Boston…"

In the same month everything worked out, and in August 1782 Machin married Susan, the daughter of James Van Nostrand, who lived in or near Huntington, Long Island.

In 1784, Machin settled at New Grange, Ulster County, where he put up several mills including a grist mill and a saw mill. His address was Great Pond, Ulster County. By March 3, 1787, he had decided to put his talents to use in the making of coins, but his petition to the New York State Legislature of that date was not approved. Thwarted, he seems to have devised an alternate plan.

Simms then says the following, which takes us up to the formation of Machin's Mills, some in reiteration of what has already been stated:

> On the 18th of April, 1787, Capt. Machin formed a co-partnership with Samuel Atlee, (a porter brewer), James F. Atlee, David Brooks, James Grier, and James Giles (an attorney at law), all of the city of New York.

The term specified for its continuance as seven years, with a capital of £300. The firm seems to have been formed for the avowed purpose of coining copper, provided Congress, or any of the state legislatures, enacted a law allowing individuals to coin money. As the object was to *make money*, a small capital was considered sufficient for the undertaking….

Simms further noted:

> Whether the long firm of *money makers* ever coined coppers enough to fill the pockets of all the Green Mountain boys; or whether they found the business profitable, is uncertain; but from Mr. Machin's papers I am led to conclude they never effected much. At his mills perhaps a thousand pounds of copper was manufactured, as appears by the papers, in the year 1789; previous to which little seems to have been done. 'What is everybody's business is nobody's'; and the saying seems to have been verified in the doings of this *copper firm:* for in a letter from J.F. Atlee to Mr. Machin, dated Vergennes, October 14, 1790, he expresses a wish that the concern might arrive at a settlement on *equitable terms*, and compromise their matters without a *tedious and expensive lawsuit.*
>
> In Jan. 1797, Capt. Machin removed from New Grange to the town of Mohawk, Montgomery county, from which town were afterwards organized the towns of Charleston, Glen, and part of Root. The fall previous to his removal he had visited his lands, accompanied by two hired men, and erected a log tenement,

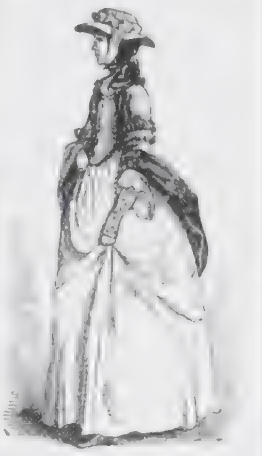
cleared a fallow, planted fruit-trees, currant bushes and sallad,—made sap-troughs, etc., etc., as is shown by a journal he kept at the time. His lands were situated 10 miles north of Schoharie Court House, and 20 south of Johnstown village.

Capt. Machin continued to practice surveying after his removal to Montgomery county, and several officers of the army were among those who profited by his skill, among whom were John Lamb, his former colonel, and Gen. Nicholas Fish.

Among Mr. Machin's personal friends was George Tiffany, Esq., a native of Massachusetts, who settled in Schoharie about the time the county was organized. Capt. Machin took no little pains to educate his children, a son and a daughter…

Capt. Machin, after seeing the country of his adoption, in the defense of which he had freely shed his own blood, pass triumphantly through two wars with the previously acknowledged mistress of the *wave*, at the close of each gaining the admiration and respect of the world, died at his residence in Charleston on the evening of April 3d, 1816, aged 72 years.

A brief notice of his services and death appeared in the *Albany Gazette* of April 15th, which closed with the following sentence: "*In the camp and in retirement his qualifications were holden in very high consideration.*" He was buried with Masonic honors.



A well dressed lady in 1785—such as might been seen in New York or Boston. (*Eighty Years' Progress in the United States,* 1867)

From the foregoing it is evident that in the 1840s Simms had access to Machin's personal papers. Where they later went has been the question of the hour for generations of numismatists who would love to pore through them to see if there are any numismatic tidbits.

Simms suggests, probably incorrectly, that virtually all Machin's Mills coinage was accomplished in the last year of operation, 1789. It seems more likely that coinage commenced in 1787, in which year the Vermont franchise was acquired.

Machin's Mills Coinage

Numismatists today believe that Machin's Mills coined a wide variety of coppers, probably anything that they thought could be circulated at a profit. Included were numerous counterfeits of contemporary British halfpennies. These bore on the obverse the portrait of George III with GEORGIUS III REX surrounding. The reverse depicted the seated figure of Britannia. At the same time it is virtually certain that pieces bearing legends relating to Connecticut, Vermont, New York, and possibly New Jersey were made as well.

In some instances the dies were mixed, probably inadvertently, resulting in illogical combinations, such as a 1787 copper coin with a Vermont inscription on the obverse and with a reverse showing Britannia, a style intended for use on a counterfeit British halfpenny, this being the well-known Ryder-13; the 1785 IMMUNE COLUMBIA (Ryder-1); and the Connecticut - Vermont muling (Ryder-39, a number assigned in later years).

The business of Machin's Mills was conducted with secrecy. A guard with a hideous mask was employed to frighten away the curious. In *The History of Orange County, New York*, Samuel W. Eager noted that: "operations there, as they were conducted in secret, were looked upon at that time with suspicion, as illegal and wrong."

To aid in their acceptance into commercial channels the counterfeit British halfpennies were struck from dies deliberately made to produce coins which looked weak, as if they had been in circulation for a long time. Presumably the coins were toned or darkened to aid in the deception. At the time, America, newly independent from England, probably had little official concern as to whether or not American citizens counterfeited British coins.

It is possible that many 1787 Vermont coppers and most if not all of those dated 1788 were struck at Machin's Mills. Nearly all of these are lighter in weight than the earlier 1785-1786 issues, are less carefully engraved, and are often carelessly struck.

As noted, Thomas Machin attempted unsuccessfully to acquire an official patent from the New York legislature. This failure apparently mattered little, for it was only a matter of time before Machin became busily engaged in the coining officially (or at least by private arrangement with franchise holder Harmon) of the issues of Vermont, and unofficially imitation British halfpennies, Connecticut coppers, and others.

Some of the dies associated with Machin's Mills and with New York are believed to have been made in Birmingham, England, by Wyon. These were used to strike certain pieces in Birmingham and were later shipped to the United States for continued use. Most information concerning the British connection is from the writing of Walter Breen, and no doubt some needs re-examination.

Dr. Robert I. Hinkley

An Appreciation and Biography by Q. David Bowers

Dr. Robert I. Hinkley, of Groveton, New Hampshire, made Vermont copper coins 1785-1788 an object of collecting enthusiasm and acquisition for many years. His remarkable cabinet, auctioned in 2001 by Bowers and Merena Galleries, included the biographical notes reproduced here. Also shown is Lot 2322 from the sale, the curious Ryder-9 Baby Head, one of Dr. Hinkley's favorite varieties.

It must have been about 30 years ago when I first met Dr. Robert I. (Bob) Hinkley, a fine gentleman and a true numismatist of the old school. At the time I was doing some research on Vermont coppers 1785-1788, an interest of mine since high school days. Bob, whose home in Groveton, New Hampshire, was not far from the border of the Green Mountain State, was an enthusiastic collector of the pieces. Around this time he acquired from me a splendid specimen of the Ryder-30, with a backward C in AUCTORI. This became his pride and joy, and today it stands high not only in the annals and registry of Vermont coppers, but of the entire state coinage panorama of the 1780s.

Over the years we exchanged many letters and telephone calls on various subjects, not only coins, but also on postcards, another shared interest. In the meantime, Bowers and Merena Galleries supplied coins now and then to fill his needs, and in one instance we handled a number of his duplicate pieces at auction.

In 1984 Dr. Hinkley retired from his medical practice, furnishing the occasion for Barbara Tetreault of the *Union Leader* to write the article herewith quoted:

Veteran Doctor Retires

> GROVETON: It was 35 years ago that a young doctor came to Groveton to work for a short time while waiting to get into an internal medicine program at the Worcester City Hospital.
>
> "I just came for six months and I'm still here." Dr. Robert I. Hinkley laughingly remembered.
>
> Through the years while other doctors came and left, Dr. Hinkley remained. For approximately the last 10 years he has been the town's only doctor.
>
> He has delivered babies by kerosene lantern, hiked into backwoods ponds to attend heart attack victims, and responded to the scene of countless accidents. The calls came in the middle of the night and in the middle of the ninth hole.
>
> This month a notice appeared in local papers announcing that the doctor was discontinuing his practice. "I will be discontinuing my practice effective immediately… I wish to thank all patients for their support through the years," the notice read. Earlier this fall Hinkley underwent heart surgery, which convinced him it was time to slow down. "I enjoy getting out and walking and not having to rush around so much," he said.
>
> Hinkley and his wife, Katherine, were born in Lancaster where the doctor's father was a lawyer and judge. But Hinkley had no desire to follow his father's footsteps as his older brother Walter did. "There was never any doubt in my mind from when I was in high school that I wanted to be a doctor," he recalled.
>
> Upon graduating from high school, Hinkley attended Bowdoin College and the Yale University Medical School. After a nine-month internship at Worcester City Hospital, Hinkley served two years in the army.
>
> When Dr. Hinkley got out of the army in April, he decided he wanted to go back to WCH to specialize in internal medicine. Since the program didn't start until January, he decided in the meantime to assist Dr. Philip Merriam of Groveton who, he said, was desperate for help.
>
> His plan at the time was to be a big city specialist. "Instead I became a small town doctor and loved every minute of it," Hinkley said.
>
> In was the close personal contact that attracted Dr. Hinkley to family medicine. "There's no place to get to know people like their own homes sitting around the table at midnight waiting for the baby to come," he said.
>
> And the doctor has delivered many babies into the world under all kinds of conditions. Hinkley, who admits he enjoyed obstetrics more than any other part of his practice, estimates he delivered 1,200 babies.
>
> In the early days of his practice, Dr. Hinkley said he did a large number of home deliveries, including some by kerosene lantern. He remembered one baby he delivered in an attic with no lights and no help.
>
> As delivering children was one of the special joys of his career, Hinkley said the death of a child was one of the most difficult things to confront. "The death of a child, whatever the cause, is one of the hardest things to accept," he said.
>
> Hinkley's office was the only doctor's office in the area where appointments were not made. Anyone wanting to see the doctor stopped by the office and waited his or her turn. "If they came to see me today, they got to see me today as long as they waited," Hinkley said.
>
> Hinkley suffered an episode in 1963 that doctors believe was a mild heart attack, and that spurred his interest in cardiology. He was responsible for getting Weeks Memorial Hospital in Lancaster its first electrocardiograph machine and started the Intensive Care Unit there. Hinkley's son, William, is a cardiologist and supervised his father's recent treatment.
>
> Like any doctor, Hinkley is full of anecdotes such as the time he was called out in the middle of the night to a home in North Stratford, only to discover when he got there that he had grabbed his bowling bag instead of his medical bag. But on the serious side he also said he would not enter the field of medicine today. "Too many forms, too much paperwork, too many people looking over your shoulder."
>
> Hinkley said the last ten years as the only doctor in Groveton were tough. He said he was able to manage only because of the development of an emergency ambulance service in the town, full-time emergency coverage at Weeks Hospital, and the Regional Medical Professional Association in Lancaster. The association is working to arrange for a doc-

> tor to hold office hours in Groveton and Hinkley said it looks very promising.
>
> While Hinkley is giving up his private practice, he will not be getting out of medicine completely. He will still be working about 20 hours a week in the emergency room at Weeks Hospital. He will also remain as the school physician. But he said the tension of worrying over a seriously ill patient in the hospital will be gone. "You can't really relax. You can't totally enjoy anything when you're worrying about how a patient is doing."

> For Groveton and Dr. Hinkley, it's the end of relationship that began as a six-month temporary job and ended as a 35-year career.

About the same time a related article appeared in his local newspaper, here quoted in part:

> The Weeks Hospital Association annual meeting held Friday night was highlighted by the official dedication of the hospital's new maximum care unit to Robert I. Hinkley, MD, who recently retired after 37 years of service. The presentation was made by Peter Powell, president of the Board, and Robert Lewis, MD, president of the medical staff. In addition to the dedication, both Dr. Hinkley and Dr. Robert Quay, who recently retired after 26 years of service, received resolutions from the Board of Trustees praising them for the years of devotion to their patients, the medical profession and the hospital.
>
> Ninety-seven members of the Association attended the meeting...
>
> Dr. Hinkley addressed the group briefly, expressing his sincere gratitude for having the new maximum care unit dedicated in his name and noting that nothing else would have pleased him more. Dr. Hinkley started the first coronary care unit at Weeks Memorial Hospital in 1969...

The next newspaper account quoted here is of a less fortunate nature and appeared in the *Union Leader* earlier this year:

> Dr. Robert I. "Doc" Hinkley, 81, of Groveton, died April 13, 2001, at Morrison Nursing Home after a brief illness. Born in Lancaster, the son of Irving A. and Mariette (Drew) Hinkley, he moved to Groveton in 1947 after returning from the military. He grew up in Lancaster and graduated from Lancaster Academy, Class of 1937. He received his bachelor's degree from Bowdoin College in 1941 and played on the football team. He received his medical degree from Yale Medical School in 1944 and interned at Worcester, Mass., City Hospital 1944-1945.
>
> He served in the United States Army from 1945 to 1947, attaining the rank of captain. He was post surgeon at the Ogden, (Utah) Ordinance Depot.
>
> He had a general practice of medicine in Groveton from 1947 to 1982 and retired from medicine in 1984. He was a member of the Week's Hospital Medical Staff from 1947 to 1984, serving as president of staff for two years. He served on the board of trustees from 1985 to the present.
>
> He was a member of the New Hampshire Medical Society; the Coos County Medical Society, serving as president for two years; and was a member of the Judicial Council of the New Hampshire Medical Society.
>
> He was appointed to the New Hampshire Milk Sanitation Board by Gov. John King. He served on the Rural Health Committee of the New Hampshire Medical Society. He was a member of the American Academy of Family Physicians from 1954 to the present.
>
> He was elected charter fellow of A.A.F.P. in 1975. He developed the first cardiac care unit at Week's Memorial Hospital. He served as the Groveton and Stark health officer for many years.
>
> He was a member of the Groveton School Board for nine years and served as Chairman for three years. He was on the building committee for the new high school. He was trustee of the York Educational Foundation from its inception to present. He was the director and past president of the Groveton Foundation for many years.
>
> He was the director of the People's National Bank, Groveton, for many years, serving as president from 1976 to 1981. He was the advisory board chairman for the Berlin City Bank, Groveton Branch, from 1981 to the present.
>
> His hobbies included duplicate bridge, in which he attained the status of senior master. He enjoyed golfing and was proud to have shot scores in the 70's in each of seven decades. He loved candlepin bowling, belonged to the American Numismatic Association and Granite State post Card Collectors Club.
>
> The family includes a son, Dr. William Hinkley of St. Louis, Mo.; a daughter, Mrs. Glenn (Caroline "Dani") Lunn of Whitefield; a granddaughter, two grandsons, nieces and nephews.
>
> He was predeceased by his wife of 58 years Katherine Hinkley, January 18, 2001.

Bob Hinkley represented the medical profession to its the finest and highest degree—a small-town doctor in the style of an ideal subject for a Norman Rockwell painting, who cared for his patients, no matter the season or time of day, followed their progress, and took to heart their improvements or regressions. By the time of his passing he was one of the most admired, most honored citizens of his entire district in northern New Hampshire.

As a numismatist Bob Hinkley pursued his hobby with interest, study, enjoyment, and careful attention. To him a coin was a passport to a distant era, to the early days of Vermont, or the beginnings of the Philadelphia Mint, or the times when a dollar was worth a dollar and was struck in gold. While he admired high grades,—as all old timers did—to him this was just one aspect of the coin, and even more important were the stories it evoked when gazed upon.

If you asked me if I remembered all of the coins Bob Hinkley bought from us, I would have to say in general terms there were many, and they were choice. However, if you asked me if I remembered Bob Hinkley, the numismatist, I could close my eyes and warmly relate many different conversations and meetings we had—and these will always be remembered. He was a prince of a doctor and a prince of a numismatist.

It is with great pleasure that we share with the numismatic community the first section of Dr. Hinkley's marvelous cabinet. The other pieces will be offered in our sale in November. I know if Dr. Hinkley were alive he would be at the sale and would personally congratulate buyers of interesting pieces, perhaps recounting how he appreciated and enjoyed each specimen.

There are many die combinations among Machin's Mills issues, some of which are not logical, and nearly all are of great rarity, these being in addition to the curious Vermont mulings described earlier.

Regarding Vermont coppers attributed to Machin's Mills, the following Ryder numbers are included: 1, 12 to 14, and 16 to 39.

An Early Numismatic Study of Vermont Coins

The earliest extensively detailed numismatic account of Vermont copper coins I have found appeared in *Historical Magazine*, January 1868 (although brief sketches of such pieces had appeared in many other places before). Note that the wording of certain text, such as the "coin house" becoming a "corn house," was later picked up by Sylvester S. Crosby (see earlier citation from *The Early Coins of America*) with both Pliny White and Crosby drawing upon correspondence from the 1850s:[1]

THE COPPER COINS OF VERMONT

By Rev. Pliny H. White,

President of the Vermont Historical Society.

Harmon's Contract

Prior to the establishment of the United States as a nation, many of the states and colonies exercised the sovereign right of coining money, as well as of issuing paper currency. The coins thus put in circulation are now among the rarest and most highly prized objects in the cabinets of collectors, and when offered for sale they bring almost incredible prices. A Baltimore halfpenny, supposed to be the only specimen extant, was sold at an auction, a few years ago, for not less than *three hundred and sixty-two dollars*. Ten, twenty, or thirty dollars is not an extraordinary price to be paid for a single copper coin, and that not of the rarest kind.

In Vermont, the coinage of money took place at a later date than in any other of the states.[2] This was not quite a necessity, but it was a result of that sturdy independence which characterized all the movements of the Green Mountain boys. Refused admittance to the Union, they felt perfectly assured that if the United States could do without them they could do without the United States in regard to money as in regard to all things else.

In 1785, the Legislature granted to Reuben Harmon, Jr., of Rupert, the exclusive right of coining copper money within the state for two years. He had already made preparations for coining, and would perhaps have engaged in the business as a private enterprise, as others had done in other states, but the legislative approbation and the exclusive privilege were worth having. He was required to give bonds in the sum of five thousand pounds, and to make no coin weighing less than a third of an ounce Troy.

The Mint

His establishment is described by the historian of Rupert in the *Vermont Quarterly Gazetteer*, as follows:—

"His mint house was located in the North easterly part of the town, a little East of the main road leading from Dorset to Pawlet, on a small stream of water called Mill Brook, which empties into Pawlet River. It was a small building, about sixteen by eighteen feet, made of rough materials, simply clap-boarded, unplanned, and unpainted. At the East end, was the furnace for melting the copper, and machinery for rolling the bars; in the middle of the room was the machinery for cutting; and at the West end, that for stamping. The latter was done by means of an iron screw attached to heavy timbers above, and moved by hand with the aid of ropers.

"Sixty coppers per minute could be stamped, although thirty was the usual number. The mint building is still standing, (1861) but its location is entirely changed; having long since been removed to the edge of the adjoining town of Pawlet, where it is now used as a corn house."

Franchise Extended

In 1786, the Legislature-granted Harmon an extension of his privilege for eight years from July 1787, allowing him the first three years without compensation, but requiring him to pay into the Treasury of the State two and a half per cent of all that he should coin during the remainder of the term. The weight of the coins was fixed at four penny weights, fifteen grains, each. Harmon then went into the business somewhat largely, taking nine other persons into partnership, and carrying on an establishment in Ulster County, New York, as well as at Rupert. As there are no coins extant of a later date than 1788, it may be presumed that the business was not continued much, if any, after that year, and that the State Treasury was never any richer for the two and a half percentage reserved.

Description of Varieties

The "image and superscription" upon Harmon's coinage was established by statute; but in reality there was considerable variety in the devices. The following is a description of the most marked of them:

1785

Vermonts. Res. Publica.

Device. An eye, symbolical of supreme power, reflecting its rays upon thirteen six-pointed stars, emblematic of the States of the Confederacy.

---

[1] Subtitles added. Notes are by the present author (QDB).

[2] Actually, Vermont coinage preceded the copper issues of Connecticut (1785-1788), New Jersey (1786-1788), and Massachusetts (1787-1788).

Legend. Quarta. Decima. Stella.

Reverse. The sun rising from behind the mountains; in the foreground a plow.

Legend. Vermonts. Res. Publica.

Exergue. 1785.

1786

Vermontensium. Res. Publica.

Device. An eye, as in the preceding.

Legend. Quarta. Decima. Stella.

Reverse. The sun rising, etc., as in the preceding.

Legend. Vermontensium. Res. Publica.

Exergue. 1786.

Nothing could be more beautifully expressed than the devices upon these coins. A Supreme power had indeed cast the rays of approval upon the thirteen infant. States, in their contest, for liberty and humanity, with the leading power of the world. Omnipotence protected them, delivered them from vassalage, and led them on to victory. The reverse upon these coins is equally appropriate: the sun, emblematic of rising liberty, even beyond the distant mountains, and the plow, the implement of husbandry and emblem of peace.

Of the first of these coins there were two types, in one, the reflected rays on the obverses being pointed, and in the other, obtuse. Of the second coin there was but one type and no variety. They were executed upon two qualities of metal, one quite good, the other inferior. Perfect specimens are very difficult to procure, and command a high price.

1787

Vermon. Auctori.

Device. A bust in a coat of mail, laureated.

Legend. Vermon. Auctori.

Reverse. The Goddess of Liberty seated, holding in her right hand the liberty pole, and in her left the olive branch.

Legend. Inde Et Lib.

Exergue. 1787.

Of this coin there were three types and five varieties, all of which are scarce. In one of the types the bust faces to the left, and in the other two, to the right. The varieties of the first type are three.

1788

Vermon. Auctori.

The description of this differs from that of the preceding only in the following particulars:

Legend. Inde* Et Lib*

Exergue. 1788.

The emission of this coin was quite abundant, and though limited to the single year it bears date, it consisted of ten sizes, thirteen types, and not less than twenty-six varieties. To describe all of these in detail would be tedious. The varieties are occasioned mainly by the punctuation of the legend, the facing of the bust, or the decoration of the head. One variety has no legend, the facing of the bust, or the decoration of the head. One variety has no legend on the reverse, in one Inde Et Lib is placed entirely on the left hand of the field, and in one the legend reads Lib Et Ind. One of them is quite remarkable, as having on the obverse the bust and name of George the Third. This may have been occasioned by a partial recoining of English half-pennies.

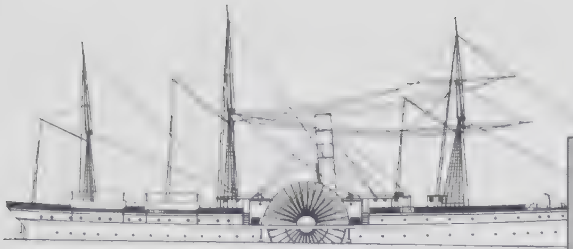
Numismatic Summary

A complete set of these coins is unknown to be extant. The largest collection of them within the knowledge of the writer, belongs to General Peter T. Washburn, of Woodstock, who has eight or ten varieties.

Single coins are occasionally to be found in the cabinets of Vermont antiquarians, or are advertised for sale in the cities. It is a consummation most devoutly to be wished that all the extant coins should be deposited with the Vermont Historical Society. Possibly there might thus be made a complete set, which would be of immense historic interest and value.

P.H.W.

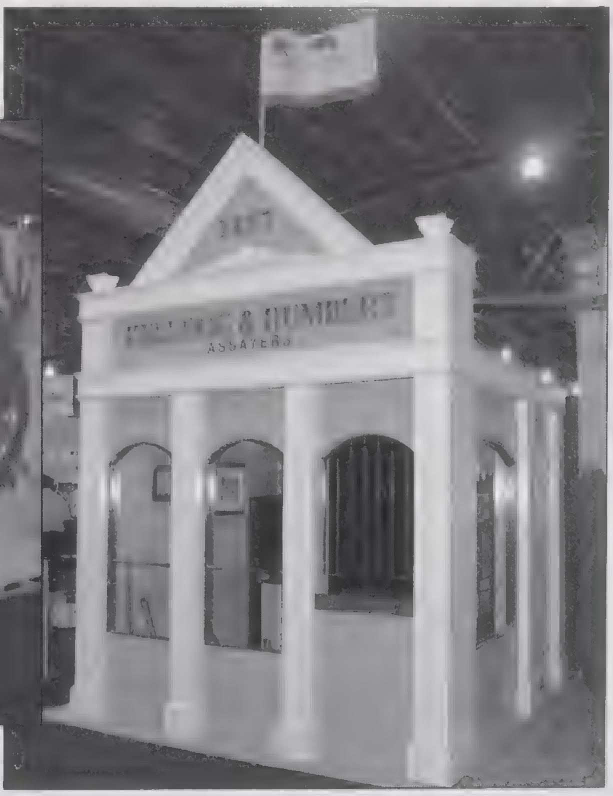
Coventry, September 1, 1864



A National Treasure

In the year 2000, the treasure from the *S.S. Central America* was brought to the public in a variety of ways by the California Gold Marketing Group, several principals of which are shown above prior to the sale of a portion of the coins and ingots by Christie's, in December 2000. The California Gold Marketing Group also presented the "Ship of Gold" exhibit in various locations, including at the 2000 American Numismatic Association convention in Philadelphia.

- At top, left to right: Tommy Thompson, Dwight Manley, Dave Bowers, and Bob Evans.
- At left, Dave Bowers, Tommy Thompson, and Dwight Manley take a break near the exhibit, at the ANA Convention.
- Below, Bob Evans of the Columbus-America Discovery Group with Chris and Melissa Karstedt holding a gold bar in front of a "port-hole" at the "Ship of Gold" exhibit and the left side of the "Ship of Gold" exhibit, with the Kellogg & Humbert Assay Office replica.



ADVENTURE NO. 45

THE 1857-S $20 FROM THE BRINY DEEP

Treasure from the S.S. Central America

The S.S. Central America, *lost at sea on September 12, 1857, remained undiscovered until over a century later when Tommy Thompson, Bob Evans, and other members of the Columbus-America Discovery Group, based in Columbus, Ohio, found the wreck in 7,200 feet of water 200 miles off the coast of North Carolina.*

A king's ransom in gold treasure was recovered, over 7,000 gold coins and several hundred gold ingots. Among the gold coins, most were freshly-minted 1857-S double eagles, about 5,200 in all! One of these is shown above.

* * *

The Treasure of Treasures

Early in the year 2000 I was contacted by Dwight Manley, who told me about the California Gold Marketing Group (CGMG), of which I subsequently became a part owner. For the rest of the year I was deeply involved with the gold coins and ingots from the *S.S. Central America*, with Bowers and Merena Galleries being among the distributors.

In the autumn the CGMG consigned certain items to Christie's, the well-known New York City auction house, as part of an earlier arrangement. I wrote the introduction to the catalogue, from which the following text is adapted.

Separately, I was busy writing a book on the treasure, *A California Gold Rush History featuring the treasure from the S.S. Central America,* which was sponsored by Dwight Manley and the CGMG, and which involved several hundred thousand dollars' worth of time, field work, and research efforts—quite possibly the "grandest" such project in the history of American numismatics. Or, at least it seems that way to me!

Meanwhile, here is a synopsis of the lost ship and its treasure:

Significance of the *S.S. Central America*

The finding of treasure is everyone's dream. However, treasure is elusive. Of the many thousands of ships that have been lost in the world's lakes, rivers, and oceans, those few that have been recovered nearly all have lacked rare coins of significance.

In the field of American gold coins the *S.S. Central America*, which went to the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean on September 12, 1857, carrying with it a king's ransom in gold coins and ingots, has yielded more numismatic treasures *by a factor of ten or more* than all other known recoveries. Moreover, no other known recovery has included even a single gold ingot of the California types found with the *S.S. Central America* treasure.

Finding of the *S.S. Central America*

The *S.S. Central America*, lost in 1857, remained undiscovered until the 1980s, when using historical notes combined with state-of-the-art technology and scientific research, the Columbus-America Discovery Group located the ship in 7,200 feet of water off the coast of North Carolina. First, the spectral outline of a steamer's sidewheel was seen, followed by other objects on the sea floor. Soon, the ship's bell, dated 1853 and marked with the imprint of the Morgan Iron Works was found, making identification certain. It was Morgan who furnished the mechanical equipment for the ship, the pride of the U.S. Mail Steamship Company when it was launched that year.

Images soon revealed an almost unbelievable display of a king's ransom in gold coins and ingots—hundreds and hundreds on the sea bottom, where they had remained for well over a century.

Using the sophisticated robotic submersible *Nemo*, especially designed for the exploration, the explorers were able to combine the ability to work at such a depth and to handle treasures and artifacts carefully, Tommy Thompson, Bob Evans, and others from the Columbus-America Discovery Group brought to the surface over 7,000 coins and several hundred gold ingots, many of which were so carefully preserved by sea sediments that upon conservation they proved to be "as good as new," brilliant, sparkling, and what numismatists designate as Mint State!

Treasure Coins and Gold Ingots

Most of the find consisted of $20 pieces dated 1857, from the San Francisco Mint. Over five thousand of these 1857-S pieces were found, most of which were sold privately in the years 2000 and 2001.

In addition, several hundred gold ingots were found—most of a size that had not been known to exist previously, far exceeding anything held in private hands or even in the Smithsonian Institution (which has a representative display of American gold ingots, but of significantly smaller size).

Excitement prevailed!

The Columbus-America Discovery Group

From the very beginning the discovery has had extensive media coverage on just about every television and radio network, in many magazines, and elsewhere. In August 2000 the History Channel ran an hour-long presentation, *Ship of Gold*, which attracted worldwide attention. By that time several books had been published about the ship, including the historical masterpiece, *The Last Voyage of the S.S. Central America*, by Norman D. Klare, the best selling popular book, *Ship of Gold in the Deep Blue Sea*, by Gary Kinder, and the elegant color-illustrated *America's Lost Treasure* by Tommy Thompson, one of the discoverers of the ship.

Now, to the scene of years ago....

California in 1848

The lure of gold has fascinated mankind since antiquity. Many voyages to the New World and elsewhere, by Spanish, British, and other explorers, were in the quest for gold. Wars have been fought, kingdoms have risen and fallen, and countries have been won and lost because of this precious yellow metal. No other substance has ever captured the imagination and engendered fascination more than has gold.

In January 1848, California was a quiet place. Several hundred people lived in San Francisco, until recently known as Yerba Buena, a village on the shore of San Francisco Bay, where the main commercial activity was the trading of hides and tallow. This commerce, of which Richard Henry Dana, Jr., wrote concerning his 1835 visit in *Two Years Before the Mast*, brought occasional ships from Boston and elsewhere to the western coast.

In addition, trade was conducted with the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii), Chile, Peru, and elsewhere. By January 1848 the War with Mexico had not yet been settled, but California had been conquered by the American forces under the Pacific Squadron. At one time there was a contretemps between J.C. Frémont, the famous overland explorer, who felt that he was representing the interest of the government in the management of the California territory, and the commodore of the Pacific squadron, who felt that *he* was in charge. Frémont lost. Frémont remained well known in the state, was one of two of the first senators elected following statehood (1850), and in 1856 became the Republican Party's first candidate for president (but did not win).

Sutter's Mill

At New Helvetia (New Switzerland), Captain John A. Sutter, a Swiss who had come to California in 1839, managed a fiefdom of tens of thousands of acres centered around what was known as Sutter's Fort. Within an adobe wall enclosure were shops, residences, and other facilities. Some ships' cannons guarded the walls, and at night a heavy gate could be closed. The area was very popular and served as a regional counterpoint for celebrations, gatherings, and the exchange of news and information.

Coins in circulation consisted mainly of Spanish-American pieces, reflective of the long heritage of the district under Spain, then Mexico when the latter acquired its independence (1821). Golden *onzas* (doubloons valued at $16), silver "dollars," and other pieces were seen in trade, along with a handful of issues from other countries including the United States, Great Britain, France, and the German states.

Seeking to provide a source for lumber, which was fairly scarce in California at the time, Captain Sutter enlisted James Marshall and several others to explore sites for a sawmill along the American River, a fast-flowing stream about 50 miles on horseback from the fort. At the same time a gristmill was being planned for the grinding of flour, this in another location.

After some consideration, a spot was selected at Coloma, and erection of the sawmill began—a structure made of logs and employing a water wheel to operate an oscillating vertical saw. As the structure neared completion, Marshall and his associates sought to deepen the channel or race, which diverted water from the river and drove the mill wheel. To do this they dammed the top of the race, then opened it at night and let the water rush through to sweep out small rocks and gravel.

Eureka!

What happened next is subject to several versions, but in essence, Marshall was looking at the water running through the tail race on the morning of January 24, 1848, when he saw a little golden sparkle, a gleaming glint. He reached down, and extracted a small flake. It looked like gold!

But was it? There were a number of things that looked like gold, such as pyrite or fool's gold. Taking two rocks, he hit one against the other with the flake between, and it flattened, and did not break, a good sign. Marshall believed that he had made an important discovery, but still was not sure. Other workers, mostly Mormons who had been in the area as part of a battalion during the War with Mexico, but were now heading to Salt Lake City, looked around the race also, and additional grains and flakes were found.

Soon thereafter, Marshall traveled back to the fort and asked for a private audience with Captain Sutter. This was granted, the door was closed, and Marshall displayed some samples of the yellow substance he had found. Sutter took from the shelf a volume from an encyclopedia and performed several tests, including weighing and subjecting the metal to acid. It most certainly was gold! As historian Hubert H. Bancroft would later write, "The mighty secret of the Sierras stood revealed!"

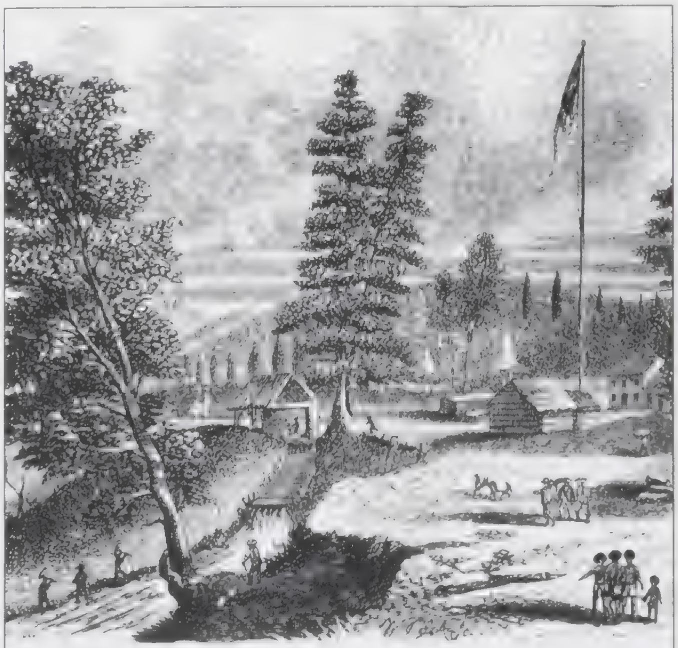
"Eureka!" Or "I have found it," became the word of the day and, in 1849, was incorporated as the state motto—that is, the motto was selected by committee, although statehood itself was a year away.

News Spreads!

Seeking to have his sawmill completed, Sutter swore the workers to secrecy and asked them to not mention the matter for six weeks. However, the excitement of gold could not be contained, one person told another, and within a few weeks several dozen men, then a few hundred by spring, were at work up and down the American River.

Rumors changed to facts as gold nuggets and flakes were displayed. Soon just about every able-bodied man had left San Francisco and headed for the gold fields. Even the local newspaper was forced to close down for lack of help and no readers!

As for Marshall, the man credited for finding the first flake of gold in the millrace on the American River



Sutter's sawmill on the American River at Coloma, where on January 24, 1848, James Marshall glimpsed a bright fleck of gold. (William Taylor, *California Life Illustrated*) at Coloma, he achieved no lasting wealth, but was widely recognized for his accomplishment.

Before long, other towns in California including Monterey, Los Angeles, and San Diego—all seaside communities—were vacated by gold seekers, and to the north in the territory settled by emigrants on the Oregon Trail, many gold seekers came from Oregon City.

During autumn 1848 as trading ships came in from the East (the "states," as that area was known), Hawaii, and other places, word of the gold discovery reached the ears of passengers and sailors. Ships were left derelict in the harbor, and their crews and passengers rushed to the gold fields. By the end of the year the harbor was a forest of masts of abandoned ships. One was brought close to shore and made into a hotel (called the Niantic). Another became the Apollo Saloon.

Scattered accounts of the California discovery were published in the East in the autumn, but fantastic tales were not particularly unusual in the newspapers of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, and there was a certain degree of disbelief by those who read them.

However, on December 5, 1848, disbelief changed to reality when in his annual message to Congress President James Knox Polk stated that, indeed, gold had been found in California, and in large quantities. Specimens were sent to the Philadelphia Mint for analysis, where the assayers found the metal to be of unbelievable quality. The Gold Rush was on!

California Ho! By Sea

On to California! There were several ways to get there. Along the East Coast groups and "companies" formed, pooled resources, bought equipment, and chartered sailing vessels—ranging from hulks that had been abandoned along the shore years earlier and were now pressed into service, to whalers, to coastwise passenger vessels. In January and February, dozens of ships left New York, Baltimore, Nantucket, New Bedford, Boston, and other ports.

In the early days, ocean travel either way was difficult. Facilities were crowded aboard ship, agents often sold more tickets than there were berths available, food was poor, and the vessels were often unsafe. As passenger traffic increased, the accommodations went from poor to miserable to positively wretched, except for those who paid a premium and secured one of the few first- or second-class cabins available.

It was not until 1850 that one could travel from East to West by sailing ship or steamer and experience any semblance of civilized accommodations. Even then, there were many unusual, indeed frightening situations aboard ship, what with professional thieves and gamblers often preying on passengers and with the travelers composed of people from all walks of life, from high society to escaped convicts and derelicts.

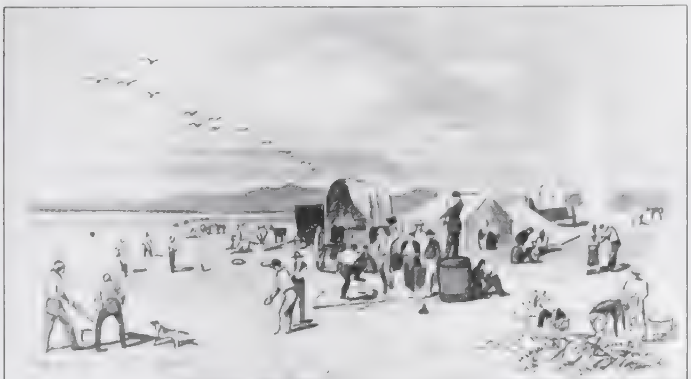
Many elected to go to California round the tip of South America, Cape Horn, continuing in the Pacific to San Francisco, nearly 15,000 miles, and about five months in travel if the winds were good and nothing unforeseen occurred. Others sailed to the Isthmus of Panama, secured passage across the 60 miles of land, and then took their chances on finding another ship to take them from Panama to San Francisco, a much shorter trip, but one that involved the hazards of tropical disease and danger in the Panama forests. On the Panama land crossing, poor roads and greedy local porters and other tradespeople made conditions miserable. Just about everyone who kept a diary later wrote accounts of the travails found in Panama. Unlike overland travelers who were too busy jouncing around in wagons or looking for food, the typical traveler by sea had lots of time to kill. Accordingly, many journals were written by seafarers often containing widely varying accounts of the same voyage, depending upon the class of service used.

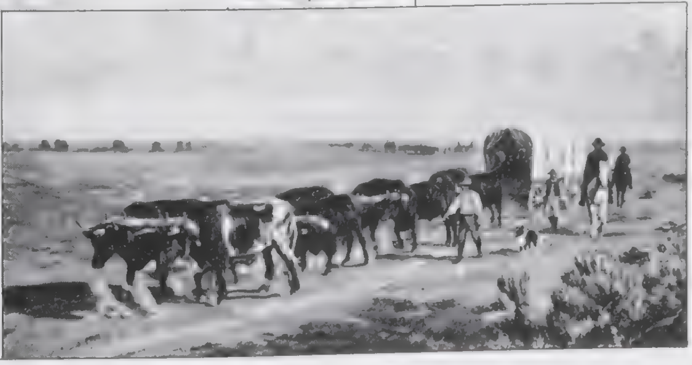
California Ho! Overland

Another and the most popular way to go to California was overland. During the late winter and early spring weeks of 1849, Argonauts—as travelers to California were called whether they went by sea or land—gathered along the edge of the plain at Independence and St. Joseph, Missouri, and Kanesville (later known as Council Bluffs), in what would become Iowa. The ways west were several, including the long established Santa Fe Trail through the Southwest. However, the most popular way was that used for part of the Oregon Trail earlier, and now with an extension, continuing from the Missouri River to Fort Kearny, past the beautiful formations of Chimney Rock and Scott's Bluff, to Fort Laramie, to the multiple natural wonders of Soda Springs (in present-day southeast Idaho), to Fort Hall, continuing on toward California, through the Humboldt River, the desert, finally to the Sierra Mountains. Some took a diversion part way along the route and went to Salt Lake City, which had been established by the Mormons in 1847-1848 and was largely a city of tents and small wood structures, with the Tabernacle still under construction.

The overland trip by ox-drawn wagon took about five months in the early days of the Gold Rush. The actual time varied depending upon the route taken and the equipment possessed. Happy adventurers in high spirits formed wagon trains, and singing *O Susanna* and other rollicking melodies, headed westward, with each night's stop being an occasion for festivities and celebration—at least at the start of the trip. With great expectations, single men as well as families heaped their wagons high with provisions, furniture, stoves, and even the occasional piano or harmonium. Shares in travel companies were issued, elaborate rules of conduct were formulated, charters and constitutions were written, and in many instances officers were elected.

Many hardships were experienced by the overland travelers, including the plague of cholera which may have carried off as many as three or four thousand of the estimated forty to fifty thousand travelers that year. Accidents, other illnesses, and starvation claimed hundreds more. Nearing California, the gold seekers encountered the Humboldt Sink and the Forty-Mile Desert, frightful areas of alkali-poisoned water, dust, and heat. Many animals perished. By that time the travelers had seen many rigors, including the loss of wagons in fording rapid rivers, the breaking of wheels and axles during passage through ravines such Devil's Gate, and by other obstacles. By the time the Forty-Mile desert was traveled, more than half of the horses, mules, and oxen had died, and at least half of the wagons had been lost. There were still hardships to come, the mountainous Sierras reaching thousands of feet into the sky, with crossings over ravines, rocks, fallen logs, and other hazards. Probably half the remaining wagons were abandoned or broken. Finally, the summit was achieved, and the emigrants, many who were traveling on foot with animals bearing packs, struggled into California, often arriving first at Hang Town (later called Placerville). So few original wagons made it to this point that they were considered to be a curiosity!





Above: "Sunday on the Plains," adapted from a daguerreotype by C. Wesley Jones. (CHSQ, June 1927)

Right: Covered wagon drawn by oxen. (Owen C. Coy, *Pictorial History of California*)

Arriving in California

By late spring those who had come by sea and the Panama shortcut arrived in San Francisco, which became a "calico city" with tents and improvised structures. Many of the tradesmen and others had returned to the town from the mines that they had explored in 1848, and were now settled into occupations such as running saloons and hotels, selling merchandise, and, especially, running gambling emporiums.

Finding gold was a speculation, and no doubt gold seekers had gambling in their blood—for just about every contemporary account of San Francisco of the era concentrates on the faro and monte tables with dealers of cards, and roulette tables with spinning wheels.

Emigrants coming to California by land or sea brought pans, shovels, containers for gold, contraptions for processing gold without much work, etc., but few thought to bring much in the way of money. Thus, by summer 1849 there were tens of thousands of newcomers in California, but not enough coins to go around. Trade was conducted in gold dust, sometimes by the "pinch." Although absolutely pure gold was worth $20.67 at the distant Mint in Philadelphia, gold taken from the stream beds and hills of California contained silver as a natural "impurity" and other substances, and was never completely pure. Gold of fairly good quality traded in commerce in San Francisco at $16 an ounce, conveniently equal to the trading value of the familiar Spanish gold doubloon.

Gold Coins and Gold Ingots

The shortage of coins continued throughout 1849 and 1850 and was filled in part by private minters, including Moffat & Company and F.D. Kohler, both of whom made rectangular gold ingots or bars, stamped with weight in ounces, fineness or degree of purity (expressed in thousandths, such as 883 would mean 883/1000th pure), a serial number, and sometimes the value in gold. The stamp of these assayers, and others who would later set up business, was a hallmark of great significance, as ingots stamped by reputable assay offices would be received in trade, exchanged in banking circles, and even sent to foreign countries and taken for the value stamped on them.

Assaying was a very difficult process, and because of this relatively few firms entered the business. Not only was a high degree of scientific expertise needed, but facilities were required for the melting and processing of gold and the storage of incoming gold as well as ingots and coins prepared for customers. Moreover, to be successful an assayer had to have a completely unblemished reputation, his word to be, literally, "as good as gold." No wonder there was not a single assayer during the first year of the Gold Rush, 1848, and by the end of the second year, 1849, there were only two. By contrast, throughout the state there were over a dozen banking and exchange offices—much easier to set up.

CALIFORNIA GOLD
TEN DOLLARS
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
1855

Gold Rush Expansion

In 1850 and onward, additional gold seekers came to the extent of tens of thousands each year. Inland cities developed, most importantly Sacramento, near Sutter's Fort, which served as the district known as the Northern mines—including Hangtown (Placerville), Marysville, Grass Valley, Nevada City, and other locations. The Southern mines were serviced by the town of Stockton and comprised many different mining camps and settlements in the foothills. Both Sacramento and Stockton were connected to San Francisco Bay by water routes, making travel easy by sailing ship, later by steam ships on regular schedules.

Gold continued to be found in streams and hillsides, the recovery of which was augmented by newly popular techniques including diverting rivers to examine their beds. Hard-rock mining exploited veins of gold-bearing quartz. The rocks from veins were pounded to dust by steam- or water-driven iron stamp mills.

Shipment of Treasure

As gold poured forth from the rivers, streams and hills of California, it was shipped to San Francisco, and from there to distant points, most notably New York City and London. Much of the treasure sent to New York was conveyed to the Philadelphia Mint and converted into coins. Additional amounts of California gold were sent to the branch mints at New Orleans, Charlotte (North Carolina), and Dahlonega (Georgia).

Shipments were in gold ingots, coins, and sometimes in nuggets and particles weighed and packaged. Tens of millions of dollars in gold were shipped each year.

While many vessels serviced San Francisco, the most popular route to go from East to West was that of the U.S. Mail Steamship Company in the Atlantic, connecting New York with Aspinwall, a new port on the Atlantic coast of Panama, and ships of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company connecting with Panama City in the Pacific, north to San Francisco. These steamers settled to a regular schedule which was strictly departures and arrivals twice monthly. In San Francisco these times would be known as "Steamer Day," a time of great excitement when letters from the east, newspapers, packages, and merchandise arrived, along with new emigrants, friends, and others. Afterward, long lines formed at the post office as people picked up their packages and letters. Other ships, including a few sailing vessels and a number of magnificent clippers, also went in and out of San Francisco.

The return to the East was by the same route, departing from San Francisco, now with gold coins and ingots aboard.

Mints in California

Beginning in 1849, and continuing into the early 1850s, several private coining firms set up business in California, including Moffat & Company, joined by the Pacific Company, J.S. Ormsby, Dubosq, Schultz, and others.

Perhaps the first coiner was Norris, Gregg & Norris, but no records to exist to confirm this. Wass, Molitor & Co. and Kellogg & Co. became important. In 1851 Moffat implemented a contract with the federal government and became known as the U.S. Assay Office of Gold, with Augustus Humbert, New York City watchmaker of excellent reputation, employed under the title U.S. Assayer of Gold. Beginning in 1851, impressive large eight-sided gold "slugs," often called *adobes* (for adobe "bricks" used in construction!), were made in quantity, affording a convenient way to transport gold from place to place. In addition, rectangular ingots were made for larger transactions and exports.

In 1854 the San Francisco Mint opened, using facilities formerly occupied by the U.S. Assay Office of Gold. During the first year, gold coins were struck there of the $1, $2.50, $5, $10, and $20 denominations. The highest value coin, the double eagle, became the denomination of choice—as it was the largest regular federal piece issued. For a given amount of work, more gold could be converted into double eagles than to any other coins. For years thereafter, gold coins, each bearing a distinguishing "S" mintmark, were struck in large quantities.

Golden double eagles were strictly utilitarian, and after they were placed into circulation they soon became scattered, worn, damaged, or lost. So far as is known, not a single numismatist saved an example of a Mint State double eagle from San Francisco in the 1850s.

The Mint Cabinet at the Philadelphia Mint, which had been set up in June 1838 to display the nation's coinage, received one striking of the first San Francisco Mint double eagle, an 1854-S, but did not have such varieties as 1855-S, 1856-S, or anything later—as amazing as this may seem today. (The gem 1857-S double eagles found with the *S.S. Central America* have no counterpart in quality at the National Coin Collection in the Smithsonian Institution or any other museum anywhere.)

It took a while for the San Francisco Mint to become fully operational, and during this time, extending through 1855, private minters still flourished. In the latter year, such firms as Kellogg & Company and Wass, Molitor & Company were active and produced mainly $20 pieces, although Wass, Molitor made some impressive $50 coins, and Kellogg anticipated doing so but, seemingly, produced only some patterns or representative examples. After 1855 there was no private coinage in San Francisco.

Token struck over a United States large copper cent dated 1849, depicting on the obverse a scene from the Panama Railroad. On the reverse is the denomination, 2½ cents, and the name of the issuer, Brandon & Co., Aspinwall.

The need for gold ingots continued, and in that city several assayers held forth, while in other towns a few more assay offices were active.

The Scene in 1857

By 1857, vast quantities of gold were still pouring forth from the Sierra Nevadas. The state was dynamic and vibrant, with the excitement of gold still prevailing, but with the trappings of civilization and luxury firmly in place—ranging from elegant hotels, saloons, and the inevitable gambling halls, to fine stores, shops, and restaurants.

The scene was one of contrast—camps in the hills where miners still sought gold and companies used large stamping mills, operated by steam or water, to extract gold. In San Francisco, "high society" enjoyed balls and concerts and savored the menus of restaurants that would have been a credit to Paris.

California continued to arouse much curiosity in the East, many books describing the life of miners, the finding of gold, and the excitement of San Francisco—including the famous Vigilante Committee—enjoyed wide readership. Popular lithographs showed views of California towns and scenes of mining. Songs such as *O Susanna*, *Sweet Betsy From Pike*, and, eventually, *Darling Clementine* reflected the spirit of the era.

Gold Treasure Shipped to the East

On August 20, 1857, several hundred passengers boarded the *S.S. Sonora*, of the Pacific Mail Steamship Line, and left San Francisco headed south toward Panama City. Aboard was over $1.6 million dollars in gold—thousands of freshly minted 1857-S double eagles, some earlier $20 coins as well, ingots, and gold in other forms. Some of the double eagles were stacked in long rows or columns and nestled in wooden boxes, put under care of the purser. Elsewhere around the ship, passengers had their own treasure—purses and boxes reflecting their success in the land of gold, the new El Dorado.

All went well, and in due course the *S.S. Sonora* landed at Panama City, and the passengers disembarked. The treasure was handled separately and was put aboard a special baggage car on the Panama Railroad, a 48-mile line that had been completed in 1855, and since then had facilitated the crossing of the isthmus in about three or four hours—quite a change from paddling and tramping through the danger-filled jungles of earlier years, when it took several days to cross.

Soon, the train arrived in Aspinwall, the passengers alighted, and the treasure was carefully transported to storage.

The *S.S. Central America* Heads for New York

The next leg of the trip was aboard the side wheel steamer *S.S. Central America*, earlier known as the *S.S. George Law*, now on its 44th voyage for the Atlantic Mail Steamship Company.

Operating under federal mail contract, the steamers of the Atlantic and the Pacific had United States Navy captains at the helm, men of proven reputation and experience. Capt. William Herndon, famous in the naval service including for his explorations of the Amazon River earlier in the decade, commanded the *Central America*.

In early September 1857, the gold treasure was carefully packed aboard, passengers found their cabins and berths, and all were ready for the pleasant voyage to New York City. The time of year was ideal for travel.

The steam pressure was raised in the boilers, the paddle wheels started turning, and the *S.S. Central America* headed out to sea—traveling at about 10 miles per hour under sunny skies.

A few days later, on September 7, 1857, the ship docked in the harbor of Havana, usually a popular stop for buying souvenirs and exploring the sights of the town. However, a fever epidemic was raging in September, and most passengers stayed aboard while some transfer was made of provisions. Some new ticket-holders boarded, but unfortunately, Mr. J.C. Lenea did not pack his baggage in his hotel room in time, and missed the departure of the *Central America* early on the morning of September 8, 1857. Oh, well. It was very inconvenient, he must have thought, but there would be another ship along later.

The trip continued to be pleasant, with sunny skies overhead, puffy clouds here and there, and smooth seas. Passengers enjoyed their surroundings—watching the ocean to each side of the ship, or enjoying the main lounge or saloon, where it was popular to play cards, chess, checkers, or backgammon, to read, and to otherwise pass the time away. Still other passengers enjoyed walking around or sitting on the deck. Food was served at intervals, and those in first class cabins could partake of wine and Epicurean delicacies. A spirit of happiness prevailed, as many had been away from the east for a long time and were eager to return.

Onward through the Atlantic

In those days, weather forecasting was not scientific. Little was known about tropical storms, their frequency, and how to predict them, although periodically hurricanes ravaged that area of the Atlantic, and their danger was well known. However, how to distinguish between a gale or small storm and a major hurricane was simply a guess. Few people knew the history of the area, including the years 1715 and 1733 when devastating hurricanes sent virtually entire Spanish *fleets* of galleons to the bottom of the sea off the coast of Florida.

At 5:30 a.m. on Wednesday, September 9, the ship's second officer noted that the ship had gone 286 nautical miles in the preceding 26-1/2 hours, and that there was a fresh breeze kicking up swells. Perhaps a storm was coming. In any event, there was no alarm. This was a large ship, well equipped, and with an experienced crew capable of handling any storm. Meanwhile, the ship plowed onward toward New York.

Wind and Waves

As the hours passed, the breeze intensified to a strong wind, finally reaching gale force. The *S.S. Central America* was tossed about in the waves, but continued on her course. The discomfort would soon be over, as storms usually passed quickly, although this one seemed a bit rougher than usual. In the meantime, card games, reading, and other amusements in the finely appointed parlors came to an end. Many seasick passengers huddled in their cabins that afternoon, continuing into the night, waiting for the wind to subside and looking forward to a bright morning. Squalls and gales sometimes sprang up along the Florida coast and were usually just a passing inconvenience.

The expected calm did not come. By daybreak on Thursday, conditions had worsened, wind was screaming through tattered sails and rigging, passengers remained below deck, and the *S.S. Central America* was in the middle of a raging hurricane. Throughout the day the fury of the storm and wind-whipped waves increased, but the ship remained watertight and the engines functioned properly.

Onward to New York! Certainly, the storm would end soon.

Instead of subsiding as hoped, the fury of the storm continued to increase. High winds and waves wracked the ship, and it was all the captain could do to keep the bow headed into the waves. This was an important precaution to observe. Some years earlier Sir Charles Lyell had written in his book, *A Second Visit to the United States*, of his terror aboard the *Britannia*, a 1,200-ton steamer of the Cunard Line, when it was caught in a hurricane in the North Atlantic on September 14, 1845. Control of the ship was maintained, and the *Britannia* rode out the waves.

Besides, now in 1857 didn't the *Central America*, well financed and with great experience on the route, have the best crew that money could hire? So it was thought.

Helpless at Sea

On Friday morning, September 11, the crew was still in control, but the steamer had begun to take on water through the drive shaft, some broken or open lights (windows to illuminate the below-deck areas), and elsewhere. The ship was tossing violently, making it virtually impossible to feed coal into the boilers.

Meanwhile the rising water reached steam pipes and became hot. Conditions in the engine room worsened. The crew down below either did their best, or they were woefully unconcerned and neglectful (depending upon which later accounts are read). In any event, water was sloshing around and the boilers and engines could not be tended properly. By any reckoning it was a tough situation.

At 11 a.m. Captain Herndon told the passengers that the ship was in danger and enlisted the aid of all men to bail water with a bucket brigade. At one point the ship listed sharply to the starboard (right side), and the captain ordered all passengers to go to the port side for balance.

By 1:00 in the afternoon the rising water in the hold had quenched the boiler fires, and the ship's immense paddlewheels came to a halt. The *S.S. Central America* was at the mercy of the sea.

An auxiliary steam engine operated a pump until the early evening when it also failed. From several accounts it seems that George E. Ashby, the chief engineer, made little serious attempt to keep the engines running. A cowardly man, he intimidated many others aboard, and placed his personal safety above all else. Passenger Thomas W. Badger, himself a captain and certainly in a position to be a qualified observer, recalled that Captain Herndon had called out, "For God's sake, Mr. Ashby, don't wait until the ship is full of water. Start the men to work bailing now."

Keeping the engines running so as to maintain control of the vessel was considered to be the first order of seamanship when running in high waves.

Disaster

By mid-afternoon, the lower deck and many cabins of the *S.S. Central America* were uninhabitable, food service had been suspended, and passengers scavenged to eat crackers and drink water or wine. A small spanker sail was rigged in an attempt to keep the ship headed into the wind, for if it was broadside to the waves it risked being swamped. However, it and all other canvas sails were soon ripped to shreds.

After a tumultuous wind and wave-whipped night, the powerless *Central America* wallowed helplessly in a raging sea on Saturday morning, September 12, 1857. Decks were awash. This was disaster experienced first-hand, not an ordinary tropical storm, and passengers and crew alike feared for their lives.

Captain Herndon ordered the American flag to be flown upside-down as a distress signal. The Atlantic coastal route was well traveled, and surely it would be a short time until other ships came along.

Before 8:00 a.m. the ship listed sharply on its side, and many portholes, some broken, were now under water. Captain Herndon once again announced that if the ship could be kept afloat for a few more hours, surely help would come from other ships plying the same route. He reminded passengers that another steamship, the ill-fated *S.S. San Francisco*, had remained afloat for over 11 days after being disabled, and this in bitter cold weather.

Hope

Good news finally arrived. By 10:00 a.m. the hurricane showed signs of abating. The worst was over.

However, bad news took precedence. Seemingly, too much damage had already been done to save the ship.

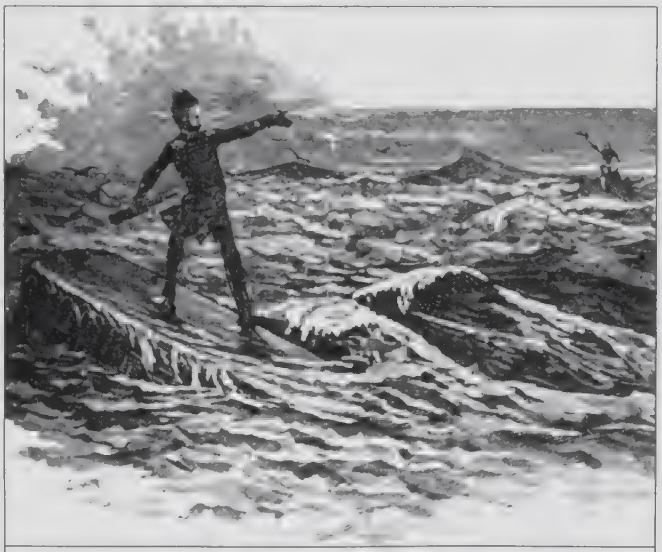
Water continued to fill what air spaces remained in the cabins and compartments in the wooden hull, and it seemed inevitable that the *S.S. Central America* had but a short time left. Still, the bucket brigade struggled against the tide, and by the use of hoists and barrels recently emptied of ice-packed pork, the men remaining on the line were able to purge the ship of about 400 gallons per minute. Unfortunately, this was not enough to make a difference. Distress flares and rockets were launched.

Abandon Ship!

At about 1:00 p.m. on Saturday afternoon, the sail of the brig *Marine* was seen on the horizon. This storm-damaged vessel, under the command of Captain Hiram Burt and 10 crew members, drew closer. Aboard the sinking *S.S. Central America* Captain Herndon ordered women and children on deck, preparatory to boarding lifeboats. Ladies left behind unnecessary baggage. Some, "as if to illustrate how little value was the gold, brought out bags (not entrusted to the purser) and scattered it on the floor, asking all who wanted money to help themselves." A few ladies picked up pieces, but none took more than two $20 coins, historian Normand Klare wrote.

Meanwhile, a carpetbag filled with $16,500 in $20 gold pieces was too heavy to remove from a cabin, and Mrs. Jane Badger, who had packed it by emptying the coins from a trunk, left the golden array behind. Later, her husband, Capt. Thomas W. Badger, dumped the glittering coins from the bag onto the floor of the captain's stateroom. Several other men spread their coins about, amounting to an estimated several hundred thousand dollars' worth. Two ladies threw a further $10,000 worth of $20 gold pieces on the floor, but no one cared.

The first lifeboat leaving the *S.S. Central America* was smashed, and other difficulties were experienced as women and children climbed into the small boats. Some were lowered in hastily fashioned rope loops or nooses in which they sat, but most jumped from the *Central America* into the boats below. Some missed the target and landed in the sea, and were fished out by those already in the little vessels.



Artist's representation of Captain Herndon on the paddle box of the *S.S. Central America* as the ship went down. (*Our First Century*)

In the coming hours the storm-damaged brig *Marine* took dozens aboard. Finally, men were allowed into the lifeboats, and a few went over to the *Marine* including some of the crew of the *S.S. Central America*, an action that caused many unfavorable comments in later investigations, as passengers expected that crew members would remain in the rescue boats to shuttle regular passengers to safety. They were wrong.

Meanwhile, many incidents continued aboard the stricken steamer including threats and fights among the remaining passengers, drunkenness of several, and numerous injuries from falling or being hit with storm-tossed wreckage. In nine shuttle trips 109 passengers were saved. The *Marine* eventually drifted several miles away and could no longer render aid.

The *Central America* continued to fill with water. By now, all bailing efforts had ceased, and most of the ship was inundated. Pounding waves broke up cabin walls and floors and tore away sails, spars, and equipment. Some of the men ripped planks and railings off the ship to make crude rafts, while others found single boards. At about 7:50 in the evening, Captain Herndon ordered rockets to be fired downward to signal that the ship was sinking, meanwhile bravely trying to reassure the 438 men remaining on board that other rescue vessels were bound to come along.

The Last Moments of the *Central America*

A few minutes past 8:00 a tremendous wave hit the *S.S. Central America*. She shuddered, timbers broke, and with hundreds of men huddled at the front of the ship and Captain Herndon on the starboard paddle-box, she slipped at a sharp angle beneath the waves. Many including Herndon went down with the ship, while others clung to wreckage or bobbed about in hollow tin or cork-filled life preservers. As passengers were drowning or clinging to flotsam, George Ashby and certain of his fellow crewmen were being comforted aboard the *Marine*.

Soon thereafter the *Central America* came to rest in the darkness 8,000 feet below the surface, about 160 miles offshore of Charleston, South Carolina. Passenger gold was scattered here and there around the ship's hulk and the surrounding sea bottom. In the hold, still stored in the wooden boxes that had been carried along the Pacific Coast by the *Sonora*, followed by a trip on the Panama Railroad, the treasure of gold coins and ingots remained intact.

At final reckoning of the *S.S. Central America* disaster, about 425 souls were lost. Only 153 were saved.

News of the Tragedy

For many weeks accounts of the disaster were carried in newspapers as passengers were rescued and brought to various ports. Considerable blame was placed upon the engine-room crew, and it was asserted that had they been properly attentive to their duties, the ship would have maintained power, continued its forward progress with its bow headed into the waves rather than wallowing in troughs, and the disaster would not have happened. A few other accounts suggested that the ship's owners were derelict in their management of the line. Several articles in *Harper's Weekly* in September and October related that the vessel was in very poor condition and suggested that the owners should go on trial for murder. Others raised a similar cry.

In time, the September 1857 lost treasure ship and its passengers were largely forgotten. Indeed, even authoritative almanacs and anthologies of disasters and shipwrecks often omitted mention of it despite its being greatest American peacetime maritime disaster up to that point. Perhaps the news of the slavery question and the ensuing Civil War obscured many memories. Consequently, few aficionados of the "trivia" games and quizzes so popular a century later would have heard of the ill-fated *Central America*, although the story of the *Titanic* disaster was known even to grade-school children.

Finding the *S.S. Central America*

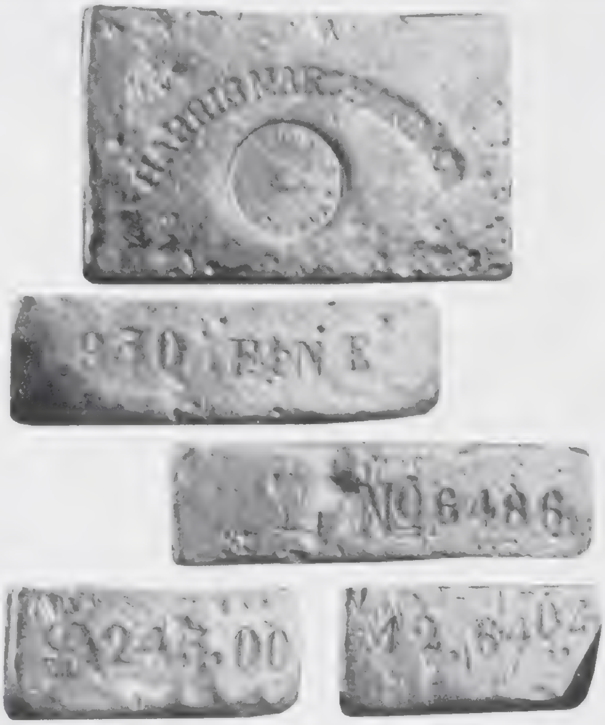
The scene changes to decades later in the 1980s:

Thomas G. ("Tommy") Thompson of the Battelle Memorial Institute, Columbus, Ohio, was a student of shipwrecks, and in 1980 he began directing his efforts toward the long-forgotten *S.S. Central America*.

In 1985 a group of explorers and investors headed by Thompson and two associates, Robert Evans and Barry Schatz, formed the Columbus-America Discovery Group in Ohio. A ship, the *Arctic Discoverer*, was outfitted with electronic gear and other devices for exploration, old charts and accounts were studied, and a search commenced. The *Nemo*, a remote-controlled mini-submarine, was constructed and was equipped with sophisticated instrumentation, lights, cameras, and a grappling device. Of particular note was a mechanism which could dispense a chemical substance at the undersea wreck site. This liquid could surround coins and other objects, harden, and then be retrieved as a solid mass without harming the items encased. Later, the hardened casing could be dissolved, and any encased treasures would be intact.

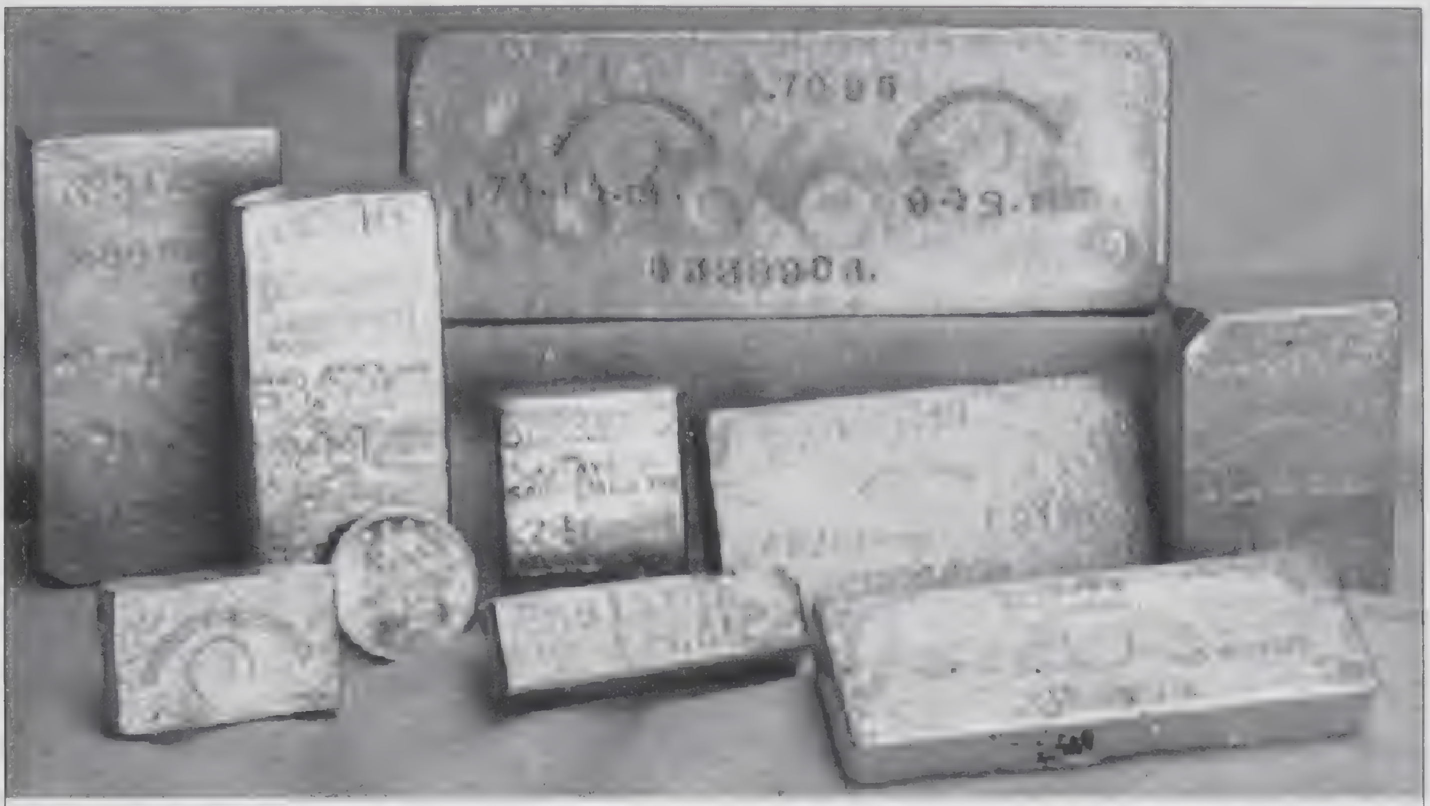
In September 1986 success was theirs, and a hulk believed to be the *S.S. Central America* was discovered in her watery grave. On July 8, 1987, a lump of anthracite coal from the vessel was brought to the surface and airlifted to Norfolk, Virginia, where it served as sufficient evidence to permit Judge Richard B. Kellam to declare that Thompson's group had, indeed, found a potentially valuable ship and were entitled to legal protection from other would-be salvagers.

In time her identity was confirmed by the recovery of the ship's bell which was marked "MORGAN IRON WORKS NEW YORK 1853" by the ship's manufacturer. Much of the wood part of the steamer had rotted away and metal components had rusted. However, a video camera image revealed that one of the large side paddle-wheel covers was largely intact. A subsequent dive of the *Nemo* proved to be wondrous: visible through the cameras was a veritable sea-bottom carpet



Compact and attractive "small" gold ingot of Harris, Marchand & Co., Sacramento, serial 6486. Markings note that it weighs 12.64 ounces, is 930 fine, and has a value of $245.00. Ingots attributed to the Sacramento office (as here) have no comma in the company name: HARRIS MARCHAND & CO. and have other differences from the single known Marysville ingot.

Unlike any other ingots recovered from the *S.S. Central America*, those of Harris, Marchand & Co. are each stamped with a coin-like die, the motif featuring an all-seeing eye. The inscription, MARCHAND / ESSAYEUR, or "Marchand, assayer," a reflection that Desiré Marchand had studied in Paris and had earned the right to use his own assayer's stamp.



A selection of gold ingots from the *S.S. Central America* treasure (with an 1857-S $20 double eagle shown for scale, near lower left). Represented are ingots made by five different assayers operating from seven different California offices in 1857: Harris, Marchand & Co. (Sacramento and Marysville); Henry Hentsch (San Francisco); Kellogg & Humbert (San Francisco); Blake & Co. (Sacramento); and Justh & Hunter (San Francisco and Marysville).

In background the large ingot displayed horizontally is by Harris, Marchand & Co., Marysville office, serial no. 7095, 174.04 oz., 942 fine, $3,389.06 (all values as stamped in 1857).

Standing, back left: Henry Hentsch, San Francisco, serial 3120, 61.93 oz., 886 fine, $1,134.26.

Next to preceding, vertical: Kellogg & Humbert, San Francisco, serial 215, 944 fine, $1,045.96.

Next to preceding, small and near center: Blake & Co., Sacramento, 19.30 oz., 946 fine, $297.42.

In front of preceding: Another Blake & Co. ingot, rectangular "Twix Bar" shape, serial 5216, 915 fine, $266.12.

To right of both Blake ingots: Justh & Hunter, Marysville office, serial 9440, 41.79 oz., $761.07.

Far right: Justh & Hunter, San Francisco office, serial 4243, 51.98 oz., 916 fine, $984.27.

Lower right foreground: Harris, Marchand & Co., Sacramento office, serial 6514, 35.33 oz., 807 fine, $589.38.

Lower left, near $20: Harris, Marchand & Co., Sacramento office, serial 6486, 12.64 oz., 930 fine, $245.00.

of glittering $20 and $50 gold pieces and other coins! Keeping the coins company were starfish and other deep-sea fauna.

The water at the 7,200-foot level is about 37° Fahrenheit. This coldness plus the great pressure combined to preserve the gold coins in far above average condition, free of the "seawater etching" so often seen on salvaged pieces.

"America's Lost Treasure"

The scene changes to decades later. Following court decisions, planning was done to bring the long-lost treasure of the *S.S. Central America* to market. The Columbus-America Discovery Group perfected an arrangement with the California Gold Marketing Group, headed by Dwight Manley, to acquire its holdings. Principals of the group sought to distribute the items in a manner which would insure their appreciation.

Most national or international treasures cannot be *owned.* There is only one Star Spangled Banner, and it is in the Smithsonian Institution. There is only one Declaration of Independence, and it is in the National Archives. The unique Mona Lisa is in the Louvre.

While many historical artifacts, accessories, ship components, and other items recovered from the *S.S. Central America* are being preserved for study by institutions and others, there were enough coins that this, truly, became a national treasure that could be shared.

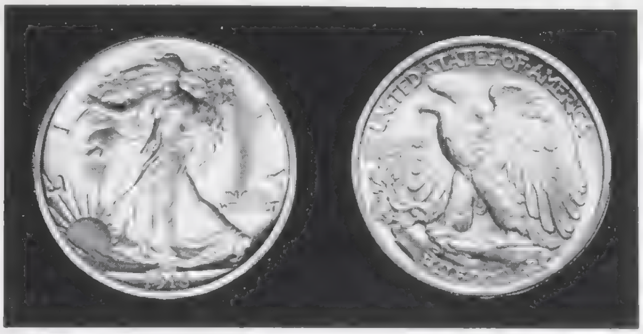
Thus, coins of a quality that had rarely been seen before, and would have been unavailable generally at any cost were offered to an enthusiastic worldwide audience of museums, historians, and collectors. Special presentations were made to give selected examples to the American Numismatic Association, the California Historical Society, and other museums.

Bob Evans created a special program that was presented at the American Numismatic Association Convention to a standing-room-only audience. Evans appeared on all major television networks to tell of how he, Tommy Thompson, and the others turned their treasure-seeking dream into golden reality.

A special traveling exhibit, "The Ship of Gold," including a replica of part of the hull of the *Central America*, authentic gold ingots and coins recovered from the treasure, and contemporary newspapers, photographs, and other accounts created a sensation in several venues—including at the American Numismatic Association's annual convention in Philadelphia in August 2000, where it was a drawing card for a record attendance of over 20,000. At the California State Fair in Sacramento a month later, over 700,000 visitors saw the unique displays.

Adventure No. 46

The 1916 Liberty *Striding* Half Dollar



The Liberty Walking half dollar was introduced in 1916. The design by Adolph A. Weinman, who also designed the 1916 Mercury dime, remained in use through 1947.

Artistry and Coinage

In 1916 the Treasury Department decided to redesign the current American silver coinage, which consisted of the dime, quarter dollar, and half dollar (the silver dollar not having been coined since 1904). Instead of relying upon the Mint's engraving staff, invitations were sent out to leading sculptors and artists, following a trend that had been initiated by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1905 when he arranged with Augustus Saint-Gaudens to re-design the coinage. After that time, private artists produced a variety of issues, including the 1908 quarter eagle and half eagle (Bela Lyon Pratt), the 1909 Lincoln cent (Victor David Brenner), and the 1913 "Buffalo" nickel (James Earle Fraser). By 1916 the Mint also had utilized artists from the private sector to do certain Panama-Pacific International Exposition coins, most notably Robert Aitken's work on the immense $50 octagonal and round pieces.

In 1916 two artists were finalists in the silver coin competition: Hermon A. MacNeil—whose 1916 Standing Liberty quarter dollar is discussed as Adventure No. 16—and Adolph A. Weinman. The latter artist designed the "Mercury" dime and the present Liberty Walking half dollar.

The result was a design which today is still acclaimed for its beauty and is high on the list of numismatic favorites. In fact, in 1986 when the Treasury Department sought a motif for its silver "eagle" bullion coins it reached back to the 1916 Liberty Walking half dollar as the best motif in its repertoire.

Miss Liberty in Motion

The obverse motif shows Miss Liberty *walking* according to popular nomenclature, or *striding*. The 1916 *Mint Report* commented as follows:

> The design of the half dollar bears a full-length figure of Liberty, the folds of the Stars and Stripes flying to the breeze as a background, progressing in full stride toward the dawn of a new day, carrying branches of laurel and oak, symbolical of civil and military glory. The hand of the figure is outstretched in bestowal of the spirit of Liberty. The reverse of the half dollar shows an eagle perched high upon a mountain crag, his wings unfolded, fearless in spirit and conscious of

> his power. Springing from a rift in the rock is a sapling of mountain pine, symbolical of America.

Coinage of half dollars in 1916 took place at all three active mints: Philadelphia, Denver, and San Francisco. The branch mint issues bore the letters D or S on the obverse, a mintmark position not seen in the half dollar series since the illustrious New Orleans coins of 1838 and 1839. In 1917 the same procedure was followed for a time, after which, part way through the year, the mintmarks were relegated to the reverse, where they remained for the duration of the series.

Minting and Distribution

From 1916 through 1921 half dollars were issued with great regularity at each mint in each year. In the last named year the mintages were very low, due to prevailing economic conditions in America.

The year 1922 was skipped entirely for circulation strike mintage, with the next production being the 1923-S. After that there was no Liberty Walking half dollar coinage in 1924, 1925, or 1926, production only at the San Francisco Mint in 1927 and 1928, only at the Denver and San Francisco mints in 1929, and no mintage at all from 1930 to 1932. It is interesting from a historical viewpoint that certain dates of the 1920s for which circulation strike half dollars were not made did, however, see some commemoratives.[1]

In 1933, Liberty Walking half dollars were made only at San Francisco. Then, beginning in 1934, production became regular once again, at all three mints, a procedure kept up through 1938, when the San Francisco issue was omitted. From 1939 onward coinage was continuous more or less, except there was no 1940-D nor was there a 1947-S.

Numismatic Notes

Numismatic interest in Liberty Walking half dollars began in a big way in the mid-1930s, coincident with Wayte Raymond's offering of his "National" coin albums, which made such coins interesting to collect in order and display. By this time most of the earlier issues had long since slipped into circulation. Today, numismatists recognize that the majority of issues from 1917 through 1929 are indeed elusive in Mint State. Issues of 1916 are by no means plentiful, but more seem to have been saved due to the first year of issue.

The Philadelphia Mint, where the 1916 Liberty Striding half dollars were minted, shown in a postcard dated 1920.

In general, the series can be divided into early and late issues. The first comprises those dated 1916 to 1929, this range including many challenges. None were struck from 1930 through 1932. The second range extends from 1933 to the end of the design in 1947. Each of the dates and mints within this period is readily found, except that in higher Mint State levels certain of the pieces of the 1930s are expensive. Issues of the 1940s are sometimes collected as a "short set." These are easily found in grades such as MS-63 and MS-64 and if selected with care are very beautiful to contemplate.

While the design of the 1916 half dollar was at once elegant and appealing, and garnered many paragraphs of praise from coin collectors and artists, at the Mint there were great difficulties experienced in striking the pieces up fully. As a result, the vast majority of all Liberty Walking half dollars have some lightness of strike in the higher parts, particularly the center of the obverse in the highest relief, including the skirt lines. Today, the astute buyer of Liberty Walking half dollars has at least four considerations determining the value of one of these pieces:

> **Grade:** Numerical or technical grade, expressed as MS-60, MS-61, and so on.
>
> **Striking quality:** Typically expressed as "average," "better than average," or "sharp." However, the latter category is rarely needle-sharp, as such pieces simply weren't made for certain of the issues.
>
> **Aesthetic quality:** Attractiveness of a toning, lustre, and overall visual appeal.
>
> **Rarity:** Frequency of appearance at a given grade, sharpness, and aesthetic appeal.

In general, Philadelphia Mint pieces are more sharply struck than are those at the branch mints. This was due to spacing of the dies in the coinage press, a situation that has a counterpart in other denominations, most notably the Buffalo nickel series (in which Philadelphia pieces are generally decently struck, and Denver and San Francisco mint issues vary considerably).

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[1] In fact, total commemorative half dollar mintages in 1922, 1924, 1925, and 1926 amounted to 1,989,555 pieces.

Don Taxay in *U.S. Mint and Coinage* notes: "Most specimens issued prior to World War II are too weak to show the striated (for red) stripes, the branch hand, or Miss Liberty's headgear." Similarly and more dramatically, Walter Breen has written that the *only* issues that are *really sharp strikes* are certain 1916 and 1917 Philadelphia Mint coins and Proofs minted from 1936 and 1942 (and, note that he did not say these were *fully* struck). Thus, circulation strikes within the entire series exist in varying degrees of sharpness to mount a challenge to the discerning specialist, with the completion of a completely sharply struck set an impossibility. To paraphrase Dr. William H. Sheldon, this is like playing a round of golf in 18 strokes; in theory it is possible, but no one has ever come close to doing it.[1]

While cherrypicking for quality is important in just about every series, for 1916-1947 Liberty Walking half dollars it is especially challenging.

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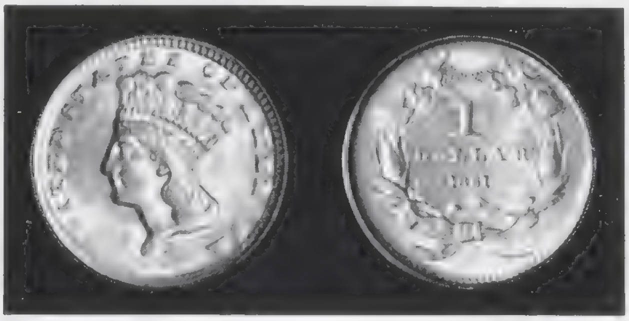
[1] Additional information is available in Bruce Fox's 1993 volume, *The Complete Guide to Walking Liberty Half Dollars*. The title of this book reflects non-standard nomenclature. The *Guide Book of United States Coins* calls these Liberty Walking half dollars, but Walking Liberty is found in several other places including in *Walter Breen's Complete Encyclopedia*. Years ago such also were called Liberty Standing, so one has many choices! As noted, the *Mint Report* had her striding.

ADVENTURE NO. 47

THE 1861-D GOLD DOLLAR AND THE DAHLONEGA MINT

Confederate Issue



The 1861-D gold dollar was struck at the Dahlonega Mint under the auspices of the Confederate States of America. Crude and irregularly struck, these pieces were made to the extent of perhaps 1,000 to 1,500 examples of which about 60 to 75 survive today. The production of this little gold dollar rang down the curtain on a mint which had been established in 1838 and which had struck gold coins exclusively, of no denomination higher than $5 as stronger presses were not on hand.

* * *

Coin Perfection or the Lack Thereof

The ideal "nice" coin should be a gem Mint State or Proof, well struck from new dies, on a fine planchet, and have as few flaws as possible. And, there are people who like such things. Among American gold coins there are some really fine one-dollar pieces of the 1880s that fit this description, and with some searching a nearly perfect Liberty Head quarter eagle of the 1900-1907 can be found. An even more fertile place to search is through modern Mint products—Proof sets, silver commemoratives, gold eagle bullion coins, and the like.

However, don't bother looking for a flawless gold coin with a "D" mintmark, dated from 1838 to 1861, as you'll die of old age before you find one!

I am referring to pieces struck in the Georgia hills, in the little town of Dahlonega, where during that period a small mint turned out a trickle of gold $1, $2.50, and $5 coins plus a solitary $3 variety, the latter being the 1854-D.

The planchets used were often irregular, the dies rusted or irregular, and the striking done with little care. Resulting were coins that were about as crude as any ever made at a federal minting facility during the era, although for some years the gold coins produced at another mint, in Charlotte, were just as sloppy.

Specialists in New England silver coins dearly love their crudely made 1652-dated Pine Tree shillings, the shallow-relief and often somewhat indistinctly struck 1787 *Columbia* and *Washington* medals are objects of intense "possession desire" to other collectors, and some numismatists might exchange the proverbial eye tooth for a holed 1820 North West tokens, these being "adventures" already discussed. Similarly, gold specialists who would not give a sharply struck gem 1904 $2.50 coin a second glance might walk a mile just to see a crude, weakly struck, but *infinitely fascinating* little gold dollar dated 1861, struck at the Dahlonega Mint.

Therein lies a story....

The Dahlonega Mint

In 1838 American commerce was expanding rapidly and new gold discoveries had been made in the Southeast. It was considered desirable to lessen the strain on the Philadelphia Mint and open branch facilities.

New mints were established at Charlotte (North Carolina), Dahlonega (Georgia), and New Orleans. The Dahlonega Mint operated from 1838 until the early days of the Civil War in 1861 and struck coins in gold, but no other metals. Each piece bore a signifying D mintmark, on the obverse on coinage of 1838 and 1839 and on the reverse on later coinage. As noted, many if not most were—shall I say it?—*poorly* struck. The little 1861-D gold dollars, for example, had the first letter of the obverse inscription weak or missing, causing the legend to read NITED STATES OF AMERICA.

Dahlonega, located in northeast Georgia about 70 miles from Atlanta, was largely developed as a community in the early 1830s. In the 1820s and early 1830s it went under different names including Headquarters and, especially Licklog, the last from a wooden trough or hollowed-out log filled with salt for cattle to lick. Afterward it was variously known as Talonega, Tahlauneca, and related terms, finally, by agreement of the townspeople in 1833, Dahlonega, from the Cherokee *taluanneka*, or "yellow money." Thus, in a way, it can be said that Dahlonega meant "gold coins." How appropriate!

In the 1830s a local newspaper was titled the *Dahlonegah Journal*. About five miles to the southwest was the earlier established boom town of Auraria, which at one time had 2,000 inhabitants in and near it (later fading away into obscurity).[1]

Dahlonega became the seat of Lumpkin County, which was carved from other counties by the Georgia Legislature on December 3, 1832. Within the decade a courthouse was erected, but not before the first contractor awarded the job absconded for parts unknown, taking the best part of $2,000 with him.

John C. Calhoun, one of the two senators from South Carolina, saw an opportunity in the area, and in June 1833 paid $6,000 for a property earlier known as the O'Barr Mine. This proved to be a very profitable investment with one of the richest yields in the district.

The town grew, and banks from other areas established offices there, including the Bank of Darien and the Farmers Bank of Chattahoochy. With the propinquity of Calhoun's investment and its location in the gold district, Dahlonega was a logical choice for a mint in Georgia.

Establishing the Dahlonega Mint

In many ways the establishment of the Dahlonega Mint in Lumpkin County, Georgia, parallels the story of the Charlotte facility (a subject for a book other than this one—and with some equally interesting tidbits of information; in fact, I wish I had space here to discuss *all* the mints).[2] Both were authorized by the Act of March 3, 1835, along with the New Orleans Mint.[3] The Charlotte Mint struck the same $1 to $5 gold denominations that Dahlonega did, except no $3 coins were made with a "C" mintmark.

A congressional study conducted in 1834 suggested that mints in Charlotte and Dahlonega would service the needs of miners and other gold owners in the area, while a mint in New Orleans would be useful in that port, which was the destination for many foreign and silver coins shipped to the United States. A much larger facility was eventually planned for New Orleans, and eventually vast quantities of silver (in particular) and gold coins were made there. In contrast, the Charlotte and Dahlonega mints were more like craft shops—provincial, loosely managed, and operated in fits and starts, with lots of problems.

In the 1830s, it cost 5% or more in insurance and transportation fees to ship gold from the Georgia mining district to Philadelphia, plus a loss on the interest value of the money involved, as the process took several weeks. Inland transportation was fraught with dangers of holdups, difficult passage over poor roads, and, often, the misplacement of shipments by freight and express companies. Clearly, a regional mint would be of benefit.

Designed by William Strickland, the architect who drew the plans for the Second Philadelphia Mint (cornerstone laid on July 4, 1829) and the other two branch mints, the Dahlonega Mint structure was to be of the modified Greek Revival style and two stories in height, quite similar in general appearance to the Charlotte building. Director Samuel Moore felt that the two mints were sufficiently alike that the same plans could be used for each, and that the cost estimates calculated for Charlotte could be equally well used for Dahlonega, thus saving time and expense.

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[1] Auraria, a name indicating gold, was later used for a settlement which became a district of Denver, Colorado (see Adventure No. 11).

[2] Sources include: Walter Thompson, "The Dahlonega Mint." *Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine*, February 1959; "The Dahlonega Mint Story," by Penelope Prewitt Cunningham, *The Numismatist*, January 1962; "The Dahlonega Mint," by Michael W. Griffith, *The Numismatist*, September 1983; Richard G. Doty, "An onerous and delicate task: Franklin Peale's Mission South, 1837," presented in 1989 and published in 1990 by the American Numismatic Society; House of Representative notes and reports, 1834-5; various issues of the *Annual Report of the Director of the Mint*. Clair M. Birdsall, *The United States Branch Mint at Dahlonega, Georgia: Its History and Coinage*, stands as the single most comprehensive reference.

[3] The wording of the legislation provided for: "One branch in the City of New Orleans for the coinage of gold and silver; one branch at the town of Charlotte in Mecklenburg County in the state of North Carolina for the coinage of gold only; and one branch at or near Dahlonega, in Lumpkin County, in the state of Georgia, also for the coinage of gold only."

Delays

Ignatius A. Few, LL.D., also known as Col. Few, Commissioner Few, and Dr. Few, whose professions included activities as an attorney and Methodist minister with a degree from Princeton—seemingly a "can-do" type of man—was hired as the government's commissioner to oversee the project. Few, who was based in Athens, Georgia, went to Dahlonega on May 6 and surveyed several possibilities for a site. By that time the plans for the Mint had not arrived, and not much more could be done. Few exchanged correspondence with Mint Director Moore, and it became evident that each was waiting upon the other. Moore had assumed incorrectly that Few was going to come to Philadelphia to work out arrangements.

Meanwhile, Moore urged Few to obtain certain estimates, although the Mint plans still had not been sent. Few was in a quandary, and to prevent further delays in dealing with Moore, decided to correspond directly with Secretary of the Treasury Levi Woodbury. In a letter dated May 23, he sent Woodbury sketches of six possible sites and ranked his preferences.

In the summer, local citizens in Dahlonega became impatient with the delay, which they placed squarely on the shoulders of Few, and on July 30 held a meeting to voice their complaints, to be forwarded to President Andrew Jackson and Secretary of the Treasury Levi Woodbury. It was stated that Few had been in Gainesville most of the time in recent months and had visited Dahlonega only from May 10 to 12, and that his health was so poor that in any event he would not be able to carry out his duties. The can-do man didn't.

By that time Few still had not received the plans. They were in transit, having been sent from Philadelphia on July 27.

The building was to be T-shaped, about 125 feet wide across the front and 33-1/2 feet deep. The rear extension or stem of the T was to be about 36 feet wide and 53 feet long. A capacious basement was provided with 10-foot ceilings, while the first and second floors of the Mint had ceilings of about 11 feet. The foundation of the basement extended five feet above ground level. The interior of the basement was fitted with substantial brick arches to support the heavy equipment and machinery on the floor above.

In the meantime, Few transacted with William J. Worley, and for $1,050 purchased the property listed as No. 949 in the town, not his first choice, but the best that he was able to acquire. Mr. Cassidy, who owned the property comprising the first three choices, did not want to subdivide the parcel. The deed for No. 949, a nice lot on a hill overlooking the town square, was forwarded to Woodbury in Washington on August 4.

In September, Few explained and defended his delayed actions in letters to President Jackson, with whom he was personally acquainted, and to Dr. Robert M. Patterson, the new director of the Mint, who encouraged him to write to Woodbury as well.

When the plans finally arrived, they proved to be slight modifications of those made for the Charlotte Mint, so similar that there was no reason that they could not have been sent months earlier.

Contract Awarded

With plans at hand, Ignatius A. Few placed advertisements in several Georgia newspapers as well as in the *Washington Globe* and the *New York Journal of Commerce* to solicit bids, with a decision date of September 22, 1835. After meeting with eight prospective bidders on September 21, Few awarded the contract on the 22nd, for $33,450, to Benjamin Towns, a builder from Athens, Georgia. Ironically, and seemingly a vindication of Few, the contract for the Charlotte Mint was not awarded until October 15th!

Some background and a status report were given in correspondence from Few to Secretary of the Treasury Levi Woodbury, under date of November 13, 1835, from Athens, Georgia (excerpts):[1]

> I have just learned from Col. Banks, who holds a memorandum given by me to Mr. Worley (from whom the lot in Dahlonega was purchased), [that he] has sent it to the Treasury Department for payment. He received it from Mr. Worley in paying of a debt....
>
> [In summary, I] purchased a lot containing ten acres, adjoining the town of Dahlonega, for $1,050, in the month of August last, having selected it in the early part of May; that [I] have received a plan and elevation of the building, on the 4th of August, from the

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[1] Reprinted in the 1835 *Mint Report* (24th Congress, 1st Session, Executive, Document No. 76).

> Treasury Department, and immediately thereafter advertised for proposals from contractors; then the 22nd September last was appointed to receive them, and on that day eight persons presented proposals for the contract, which was taken by Mr. Benjamin Towns, one of the eight (his being the lowest offer), for the sum of $33,450; the edifice to be completed by the 22nd day of March, 1837, and a bond for the performance of the contract, with a penalty of $66,900, was signed by the contractor and Dr. James Tinsley and Col. John A. Cobb, all of Athens, Georgia.
>
> The contractor expects, during the present year, to be able to have the cellars and the foundations dug out, and a part of the stone quarried and prepared for laying the foundations, also to collect wood for his brick kilns, and to procure a part of the lumber. His operations, during the ensuing winter, will be chiefly confined to the preparation of his materials, that he may be enabled to commence laying the foundations and burning the brick with the opening of the spring.

The Dahlonega matter did not end as simply as the above report suggests, for after Few placed the contract with Towns, he read a letter from Mint Director Robert M. Patterson, who stated that Farish Carter, from Milledgeville, wanted to bid and should be given consideration. Few replied to Patterson that one of the interested parties with whom he had met on September 21 was a Captain Clay, who was associated in the gold-mining business with Carter.[1] During that meeting Clay had voiced some complaints about Few and the way he was handling things, alerting Few to possible trouble. Nothing was changed, and Towns retained the commission to build the mint.

In January 1836, Dr. James Tinsley, of Athens, who was one of two bondsmen for Benjamin Towns, visited the Philadelphia Mint to familiarize himself with the machinery and processes used in minting.[2] During this period, arrangements were made at a cost of $14,987 for Merrick, Agnew & Tyler, of Philadelphia, to furnish two small-size steam driven presses and other equipment. The various machines were powered by a distant steam engine connected by shafts and pulleys.

Erecting the Dahlonega Mint

Work on the Dahlonega Mint progressed in early 1836, and by mid-April most of the foundation had been put up and material had been purchased for the upper exterior walls. Work proceeded slowly, and overseer Ignatius A. Few supplied reasons, including potential danger from Cherokee Indians in the region who were angered at the terms of a treaty with the United States agreed to in December 1835, and unusually heavy rainfall. By autumn, the building had risen only to the sills of the first-story windows.

Subsequently, Few advised that the Dahlonega Mint should be ready to receive machinery by May 15, 1837. Early in that year officers were appointed. Dr. Joseph J. Singleton, of Athens, was named superintendent and treasurer; David Hastings Mason was appointed as the coiner; and Dr. Joseph W. Farnum, of Lexington, Virginia, was given the post of assayer and melter.[3] Singleton and Farnum went to the Philadelphia Mint to learn from the activities of those in similar posts.[4] Mason, a resident of Philadelphia, was recognized as an engraver on wood and as the inventor of a device for repeating ornaments and devices on bank notes and printed documents. At the time of his selection for the Dahlonega post he was a die maker at the Philadelphia Mint.[5]

It was a curious circumstance that made Singleton available for the superintendency.[6] Earlier, he had been a state senator and legislator. In 1834 he sought election to the United States House of Representatives, but his ambition was resisted by William E. Jones, editor of the *Athens Whig.* Immediately prior to the election, Jones wrote an obituary for Singleton and had it published in newspapers throughout the state. By the time the ballots were cast—and few wanted to vote for a dead man?—the prank could not be corrected.

Following the time suggested by Few, Superintendent Singleton went to Dahlonega in spring 1837 to take up his post and to supervise the incoming equipment and its testing. Upon his arrival he was at first optimistic, then as he became acquainted with the progress, realized that there were major deficiencies. The contractor was behind in his schedule, no provision had been made for water to supply the steam engine, and zinc sheeting could not be obtained for the roof. Worst of all, as Singleton advised Director Patterson on August 6, the bearing or foundation walls had been poorly constructed, and one of them had buckled.

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[1] Earlier, Clay had been a partner with private gold coiner Templeton Reid (who struck coins in 1830) in the Oconee Navigation Company, which became defunct.

[2] Tinsley enjoyed mechanics and the arts and was conversant with many related topics.

[3] Professor of history and philosophy at Washington College in Lexington. At the time Farnum's discipline in philosophy, also called natural philosophy, was largely the study of science and practical investigation, not morality.

[4] R.W. Julian, "The Dahlonega Mint: 1835-1838," *Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine,* April 1966, p. 776, here adapted.

[5] Head and Etheridge, *The Neighborhood Mint,* p. 33.

[6] *Ibid.,* p.33.

Singleton found that overseer Few had spent little time on the project, that local workmen were mostly unskilled, and that no one on the site knew anything about mints or minting. The whole affair was a sorry mess.

On April 22 (or 23), 1837, machinery was shipped in 15 crates from Philadelphia on the brig *New Hanover* and included the following:[1]

> 2 planchet-cutting presses and flywheels for same
> 2 small-size coining presses, designated as A and E, with, crankshafts, cams, and flywheels for each.
> Draw bench for planchet strip.
> Drawing frame head, tongs, saddle, and chain for the final preparation of planchet strip.
> Pointing rollers for strip preparation.
> 18 annealing pans.

In May 1837, the above and other equipment arrived at the port of Savannah, after a voyage from Philadelphia. From there it was sent upriver on a steamer to Augusta, from which point ox-drawn carts were used to haul the machinery the remaining distance overland and through the mountains to Dahlonega.

Inspectors to Dahlonega

Director Robert M. Patterson sent Dahlonega Coiner David H. Mason, who had been working and gaining further training at the Philadelphia Mint, to Georgia in September 1837 to file a report on the progress of construction, in view of conflicting information he had received up to that time.[2] Mason, who seems to have had a knowledge of the building trades, recommended alterations to strengthen the foundation and floors. By that time, work on a well for water supply was in progress. By that time a crew of mechanics from the Sellers firm in Philadelphia was on hand working with the machinery, the team including William Baker (at $5 per day) and his assistants, Jesse Keenan, William Short, and John Taylor, each at $3 per day. The invoice for their efforts totaled nearly $900.

Franklin Peale, who had been sent by Director Patterson to check on the progress of the Charlotte and Dahlonega facilities, finished his duties at Charlotte on November 10, 1837, and began his journey of several days to Dahlonega, with his young daughter Anna as his companion. Arriving on the afternoon of the 14th, he sought to meet with Superintendent Joseph Singleton, but the latter was nowhere to be found.

During the next several days Peale verified the problems that Singleton had corresponded about, and that the drunkenness and poor abilities of the workmen, in combination with an incompetent contractor and lackadaisical oversight, had created even more difficulties, errors, and delays than had been anticipated. "Col. I. Few has not by his presence or attention sufficiently protected the interests of the government." To make the bricks called for by the specifications, the contractor improvised by using local red soil, largely decomposed granite, which resulted in a product considerably weaker than the "hard burnt" bricks mandated. Ironically, there was an abundant supply of natural granite rock in the area that could have been used effectively. "Part of the cause of delays and poor workmanship may be fairly traced to Philadelphia in ordering a brick building in a country in which there is no clay," Peale noted.[3] The brick was given a stucco facing. Further, "The roof, from bad workmanship, is decidedly insufficient to protect the interior from the weather."

The arrival of workmen, including bricklayers from Philadelphia, who had recently finished their duties at the Charlotte Mint helped with matters, but in the end the government had no choice but to accept the substandard construction, or there would have been no mint at all.

By the end of November, most of the machinery was in place and was operable. However, by 1838 the roof leaked, not all construction work had been completed, and, adding insult to injury, overseer Ignatius A. Few demanded a pay increase and refused to turn over certain funds entrusted to his care, even though he had not been seen in Dahlonega since the summer of 1837! The demand that he turn everything over to Superintendent Singleton was ignored. Soon, Few was involved in the establishment of Emory College in Covington, Georgia, and in 1838 he became its first president. By the summer of *1840*, some aspects of the Dahlonega Mint construction were still unresolved.

Early Operations at the Dahlonega Mint

A letter from the Secretary of the Treasury [Levi Woodbury], March 23, 1838, included this information:[4]

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[1] R.W. Julian, "The Dahlonega Mint: 1835-1838," *Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine*, April 1966, p. 776 (April 23 departure date); Head and Etheridge, *The Neighborhood Mint*, p. 35 (April 22 date given).

[2] Mason took a train from Philadelphia to Baltimore, where he boarded a ship, later continuing his journey by land to Dahlonega, involving 13 days in transit from Baltimore (cf. Head and Etheridge, *The Neighborhood Mint*, p. 38).

[3] Walter Thompson, "The Dahlonega Mint." *Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine*, February 1959; Head and Etheridge, *The Neighborhood Mint*, p. 40.

[4] 25th Congress, 2nd Session, Document No. 273. House of Representatives. Treasury Department. This was in response to a resolution of the House of Representatives, March 5, 1838, requesting certain information regarding "the Principal Mint of the United States and its Branches, &c."

> The contract price for the mint edifice was $33,450. The expenses incurred here, in fitting out the establishment, amount to $21,450. The various appropriations…made prior to the present session of Congress amount to $59,000; but we have no precise information as to further details of expenditure….
>
> The first deposits were made at this branch on the 12th of February, but I am not informed as to the amount that has been received. It is intended to make with this mint the same arrangement for the purchase of bullion as that made with the mint at Charlotte.
>
> The coinage has not yet commenced at this mint. My information from the several branches shows, however, that they are all on the point of entering into full production.

The Dahlonega Mint Begins Coinage

By the end of January, 1838, the Mint officers were on hand as were staff workmen. On January 26, 1838, Coiner David H. Mason arrived from Philadelphia, bringing with him two pairs of half eagle dies.[1] For much of the preceding year Mason had been at the Philadelphia Mint working with Chief Coiner Adam Eckfeldt and his assistant, Franklin Peale. Among Mason's early duties at Dahlonega was to fix the well providing a water supply. In the meantime, for various operations workmen carried water in buckets to the main building.

The typical workday was supposed to begin at sunrise and end at sunset, with appropriate recesses for breakfast and dinner (lunch).[2] However, some of the employees set their own schedules, much to the dissatisfaction of their co-workers and the superintendent. Charles Gilbert, a melter under direction from Assayer Joseph W. Farnum, refused to obey orders, would not unload material from wagons, and stated that he did not come to Dahlonega to serve "as a Negro." Gilbert became increasingly intractable and was told to conform to Mint policies or leave. He left, and set up a jewelry business in town, an enterprise that lasted but briefly, after which he left the town.

William Warwick came from Philadelphia to replace Gilbert. Although Director Patterson endorsed the newcomer as a fine Englishman accustomed to hard work, and "very industrious, good natured, and willing, and never thinks of refusing to do anything which is asked of him," he also noted that he had a drinking problem. At Dahlonega, Warwick was in the midst of a drinking and gambling milieu—a typical gold rush town—and indulged his addiction and, further, was accused of "trafficking in gold." However, he was considered to be a good employee at the Mint.[3]

By early March animosity flared up between Coiner Mason and Assayer Farnum, and the two were not on speaking terms. Each tried to influence Superintendent Singleton and Director Patterson to condemn his opponent. Events took an unexpected twist, and Mason and Farnum heard rumors that they both were going to be fired, seemingly at the request of Singleton. In June, the pair reconciled their differences and began a campaign to have Singleton replaced. Such bickering, involving different participants over a long period of time, was to characterize Dahlonega Mint operations throughout its existence.

Ready or not—and the Dahlonega Mint certainly was not completely ready—coinage commenced on April 17, and on April 21 a group of 80 $5 gold half eagles had been struck on a steam press which was capable of spewing out coins at the rate of 50 to 60 per minute.[4] One of the 80 pieces was reserved for the Assay Commission, and the other 79 were destined for circulation *in due course,* this according to policy. Historian R.W. Julian related:[5]

> A peculiar feature of the branch mint coinage was that prior to the preparation of *planchets* a "slip" (or sliver of metal) was shaved from each melt of gold and sent to Patterson to be assayed by Jacob Eckfeldt of the Philadelphia Mint. Then when Singleton had received word from Philadelphia that the melt was of correct fineness (within legal tolerances) he issued the coins that had been struck in the meantime.
>
> With this absurd system in effect, one naturally wonders what would have happened had some of the slips gone astray and never arrived at Eckfeldt's assaying emporium in Philadelphia. Well, just this very thing happened to melt slips #9, 11, 12, and 14, which were robbed from the mail by a postmaster living about 20 miles from Dahlonega. Singleton started writing more letters inquiring about when he could release those coins to depositors who were clamoring for them,

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[1] R.W. Julian, "The Dahlonega Mint: 1835-1838," *Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine,* April 1966, p. 776.

[2] Head and Etheridge, *The Neighborhood Mint,* pp. 49-50.

[3] The entire record of employee service in the various United States mints is strewn with accounts of problems, conflicts of interest, inattention to duties, and more. Working in a "coin factory" was anything but inspiring or stimulating to many if not most of the workers, it would seem.

[4] Dates for the inception of coinage vary and include April 17 (Julian) and April 21 (Birdsall). Throughout the history of this and other mints, coining dates were apt to be one time and delivery dates another; often a date was given in correspondence or in reports without distinguishing between the two. In general, delivery dates were used most often in printed reports.

[5] R.W. Julian, "The Dahlonega Mint: 1835-1838," *Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine,* April 1966, p. 777.

> but Patterson didn't get all of those letters either, because the wily mailman stole some of these too. The light-fingered roadblock was putting quite a crimp in branch operations.
>
> The first thefts were in July 1838, and Singleton did not discover until mid-October who the thief was. Oddly enough, the "ruffian" (as he was described by Singleton) had kept part of the letters, and these were forwarded to Patterson eventually.[1]
>
> Unfortunately, the superintendent had neglected to keep duplicate melt slips on hand and had to hammer up three coins to send in as melt slips. These three pieces account for the fact that 20,586 half eagles were struck at Dahlonega in 1838 (exclusive of 41 assay pieces), but only 20,583 correctly reported as coinage.

Contrary to instructions, Singleton released the first group of half eagles into local circulation without receiving word from Philadelphia as to whether they were satisfactory.[2]

The Coining Presses

Apparently, Superintendent Singleton believed there were problems with the steam powered presses and considered writing to Patterson to request screw presses of the old manual style. However, Coiner Mason assured Patterson:

> I do not think such a one is needed. I can do very well with those we have, and have no more difficulty with them than I first anticipated. I prefer the power press.[3]

Patterson addressed the subject in a note to Superintendent Singleton (excerpt):

> I find that you have had some difficulty with the power press. It was to be anticipated; but you are much deceived if you suppose the hand press would not have required equal attention.... I pray you not to think of using the screw press. This is not the age in the country for going backwards.[4]

The *Annual Report of the Director of the Mint*, 1838, included this summary of the first year's operations:

> The branch mint at Dahlonega commenced its operations in February and has received deposits of gold equal to the value of $141,800.[5] The amount of its coinage has been $102,915, composed of 20,583 half eagles.

Not mentioned in connection with Dahlonega was the "final solution" of the Cherokee problem. Natives to the area, they had resisted depredations by white men who roamed through the district in search of gold and to establish homesteads. Maj. General Winfield Scott and his troops had swept through the Cherokee Nation, including the Dahlonega region, from mid-May 1838, and by June 18 not a single Native American remained in the district, unless in a prison. Superintendent Singleton expressed his relief with the expulsion, for he believed that, somehow, the Cherokees might have raided the Mint to obtain gold.[6]

Dies made at Philadelphia were shipped unhardened to Dahlonega, so that they would be of little use if they were stolen or fell into the wrong hands.[7] In the machine shop at the destination, the dies were hardened by heating to cherry red, then quenching. This process produced a black scale on the face of each die, which had to be removed by filing or turning on a lathe. At Dahlonega, as in Charlotte, this was often accomplished crudely, especially on the gold dollar dies (beginning in 1849). In addition, at Dahlonega on some occasions, dies stored in the Mint vault became rusted.[8] As a result, coins were often very "rustic" in their appearance—with rough, irregular surfaces.

During the year gold mostly came from regional banks, much to the concern of Assayer Joseph W. Farnum, who wondered if future supplies of newly-mined gold would be sufficient to keep the Mint busy. Deposits included 327.2 ounces in coined British sovereigns which were melted and converted into 1,253 half eagles.

Deposits at the Dahlonega Mint were insufficient to keep the staff busy, although Assayer Farnum complained of overwork from his multiple duties of assayer, melter, and refiner.[9] Certain others were idle or even absent, and it was reported that for the first 12 weeks that Farnum was at the Mint, Superintendent Singleton was on hand for only six weeks. At best, Singleton seems to have been casual in his duties. Correspondence to and from the director of the Mint in Philadelphia reveals that his bookkeeping was sloppy and often erroneous.[1]

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[1] The culprit was a deputy postmaster who lived about 20 miles from Dahlonega (cf. Head and Etheridge, *The Neighborhood Mint*, pp. 57-58).

[2] Head and Etheridge, *The Neighborhood Mint*, p. 52.

[3] Clair M. Birdsall, *The United States Branch Mint at Dahlonega, Georgia: Its History and Coinage*, p. 21.

[4] Julian, "The Dahlonega Mint: 1835-1838," *The Numismatic Scrapbook*, April 1966, p. 776; Birdsall, *The United States Branch Mint at Dahlonega, Georgia: Its History and Coinage*, p. 22.

[5] The February date referred to assay and refining operations, not to coining.

[6] Head and Etheridge, *The Neighborhood Mint*, p. 46.

[7] See instructions for the Charlotte Mint, A.J. Stautzenberger, *The Establishment of the Charlotte Branch Mint*, pp. 134-135. The same procedure was used for all three branches.

[8] R.W. Julian, "The Dahlonega Mint: 1835-1838," *Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine*, April 1966, p. 777, noting that a pair of half eagle dies "had been found to be rusty when they were taken out of the vault."

[9] Head and Etheridge, *The Neighborhood Mint*, p. 53.

Events of 1839 and 1840

The coinage of half eagles continued each year from 1838 onward, joined by quarter eagles beginning in 1839. Bearing out Farnum's concern, bullion deposits trended lower. In 1839, Mint Director Robert M. Patterson calculated that for every $100 coined in gold at the Charlotte Mint, $14 was incurred in expenses, and wondered if Congress would close both the Dahlonega and Charlotte facilities.

The zinc roof on the Dahlonega building leaked badly—not surprising in view of Franklin Peale's 1837 report concerning its deficiency—and in 1839 it was replaced with wood shingles coated with rosin and paint—seemingly a highly inflammable mixture. The metal rollers used to make planchet strip were not up to the job, and on several occasions Superintendent Singleton and Coiner Mason requested new, harder steel rollers of different sizes. There were several delays in 1839 and 1840 due to the slow receipt of dies from Philadelphia, resulting in the Dahlonega staff "lying on our oars," according to pleas sent to Director Patterson.[2]

Singleton was no admirer of William Kneass' *Classic Head* used on the 1838 half eagles, and when he saw the *Liberty Head* dies by Christian Gobrecht, sent for use on the 1839 half eagles, he wrote that the "engraving is much improved."[3] In 1840 the *Liberty Head,* also called the *Coronet Head,* was first used on quarter eagles.

In April 1840, only 99.5 ounces of standard gold was obtained at Dahlonega—not enough to keep the staff busy. Often, there were spans of weeks without a single coin being struck. The Dahlonega employees lived with the fear that the facility would be closed and they would be without work.

Seeking to justify their continued operation, in 1840 the Senate passed a bill to allow silver coinage at both mints, but there was never enough silver on hand to justify separate operations in that metal, unlike the situation at New Orleans, which had an abundant supply of Spanish-American, French, and other silver pieces for melting and recoinage. Both of the southeastern mints were "pets" of the representatives to Congress from that region, and it was probably political connections that kept their doors open for so long.

By his own preference, Director Singleton constructed a private residence in the area, while Coiner David H. Mason and his family were invited by the superintendent to occupy an apartment within the Mint, at least until a later superintendent, Cooper, forced him to find other accommodations in April 1846.[4] Others lived in the Mint as well, including Assayer Farnum and Clerk Edward H. Wingfield in the early years.[5] This was a *quid pro quo* situation as the building was thus effectively guarded in the off hours. Later, Singleton and Mason argued when the latter wanted to spend additional money improving his living quarters.

Mason, who hailed from Philadelphia, had important friends at the Philadelphia Mint, where he had worked before coming to Dahlonega, and, seemingly, he was treated as a fair-haired child by the director there. Meanwhile, at Dahlonega he was perceived as tyrannical by the superintendent (who was in fear of Mason's outbursts) and certain staff members.[6] In one instance, Mason ordered an engineer at the Mint, Charles Thomas, to construct for him a pair of scales, despite Thomas' protest that he had no knowledge of how to do it and, besides, no additional scales were needed at the facility. Thomas went over Mason's head and wrote to Director Patterson to complain about his treatment, stating that it seemed that he wanted to drive him out of the Mint so that his son, Zelotes Mason, could be hired in his place. Thomas soon gave up and left the Mint, much to the dismay of Superintendent Singleton, who called him "a superior mechanic" and "an obliging and honorable man." An endorsement for Thomas was signed by everyone on the Mint staff except Mason.

In 1839 Singleton became embroiled in a bitter fight with Green K. Cessna, the local postmaster, and intimated that mail was still being stolen. In turn, Cessna wrote to Secretary of the Treasury Levi Woodbury to accuse Singleton of colluding with Mint suppliers, paying his workmen in depreciated paper money he had personally bought at a discount, and other malfeasance.[1]

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[1] *Ibid.,* p. 60, citing various letters of 1838 and 1839. As if that was not enough, the system of sending supplies to the various mints was often subject to errors arising from the director's office in Philadelphia or with instructions given elsewhere, so that "sometimes supplies meant for the Charlotte or New Orleans branches or even the Philadelphia Mint were sent to Dahlonega instead" (cf. Head and Etheridge, The Neighborhood Mint, p. 63).

[2] Clair M. Birdsall, *The United States Branch Mint at Dahlonega, Georgia: Its History and Coinage,* p. 21.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] R.W. Julian, "The Dahlonega Mint: 1843-1847," *Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine,* July 1967, p. 1242.

[5] Head and Etheridge, *The Neighborhood Mint,* p. 53. Further from the same source: "He lived alone in the mint [he was a bachelor and had an apartment there], and such pleasures as the little town of Dahlonega offered did not appeal to him. He spent little if any of his salary." His wages were retained in Philadelphia and invested for his benefit there, including for Lehigh Railroad stock.

[6] *Ibid.,* pp. 69-71.

Coiner Mason went back to Philadelphia for a visit and to shed light on the charges against Singleton. It was learned that Singleton had profited on currency,[2] and sometimes personal and Mint funds were commingled, but it was decided that the charge of "gross negligence" made by the postmaster was going too far. For tattling on the Dahlonega personnel, Mason earned the enmity of the staff, this in a situation which was already less than peaceful. Things seem to have simmered down when Zelotes H. Mason, son of the coiner, was given a staff position at Dahlonega in 1840 and, concurrently, Singleton corrected some of his irregular practices. Prior to his hiring, Zelotes was considered to be a drunkard and roué by the employees. Surprisingly to everyone except, perhaps, his father, Zelotes worked well in his new position.

An overlying consideration for the restoration of peace among the employees in Dahlonega in 1840 was that a full-blown public scandal might cause legislators in Washington to abolish the facility, something that no one wanted to happen. Besides, there were always outside problems with which to contend, such as the irregular flow of gold deposits and, in 1840 a local fraud. The latter was the work of a certain Mr. Pinchback, who lived in Dahlonega and made it known that he would pay 6% more than the Mint would to buy gold bullion. He accumulated tens of thousands of dollars' worth of gold, alloyed it heavily with about 40% silver, then shipped it as "gold" to distant markets and unscrupulous buyers, who then foisted it off on unsuspecting buyers. With Pinchback as a strong competitor, bullion deposits at the Dahlonega Mint decreased. Some of this low-value metal made its way to the Philadelphia Mint, where assays showed it to be only 594 to 605 fine![3]

Quarter eagles proved to be unpopular in 1839-1840, and few depositors wanted them. Superintendent Singleton wrote to Director Patterson to state that the dies for this denomination cracked more frequently than did those for $5 coins, and it was difficult for the machinist to turn the dies. If only half eagles could be struck, procedures would be simplified.[4]

Dies cracked while being hardened for use, or, sometimes, almost as soon as they were placed on the coining press. Coiner David H. Mason laid the blame on the poor quality of steel used at the Philadelphia Mint, but it seems that the problem was with the construction of the press, which had excessive vibration during the coining process. At a later time at least one coining press was rebuilt, resulting in increased die life.[5]

On June 10, 1840, during the coining of 1,817 half eagles, the reverse die, mounted in the bed of the press, slipped so as to rotate out of position. Coiner David H. Mason gave the excuse that while he was at dinner, "men through neglect or otherwise, let the under die be turned in its position so that the heads of the devices stand quartering."[6]

In January 1840, Singleton responded to a request by the Georgia delegation to Congress to supply information on the outlook for the Dahlonega Mint, the production of gold in the area, and other matters relative to keeping the doors of the mint open. The superintendent stated that the decrease in mining in recent times was due to the removal of the Cherokees, some of whom had been miners, and the opportunity for workers to be employed at high wages building the Western & Atlantic Railroad. However, on the plus side of the ledger, new gold veins were being discovered, and the future was viewed as being, literally, golden. Besides, if the Mint were to be closed, the building and fixtures that cost the public upward of $75,000 would not bring even $10,000 upon resale.[7]

By autumn 1840, the situation seemed to be on the upswing. The silver-alloy swindle by Pinchback had been broken, gold deposits had increased, and men were easier to hire now that the railroad did not need many new workers. Unfortunately, the Democratic party which had put Superintendent Singleton in office did not win at the presidential polls in November. The victory went to William Henry Harrison, a Whig.

Realizing that he might be ousted, Singleton asked if Mint Director Robert M. Patterson would endorse his continuation in office. As it developed, Singleton had many enemies in Dahlonega, and a contingent of 88 local citizens wrote to the Georgia congressional delegation recommending his removal, and charged him with various improprieties, including using the Mint for his private profit.

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[1] The charges are itemized in Head and Etheridge, *The Neighborhood Mint*, pp. 73-874.

[2] He profited by 2% with the exchange of Treasury notes for local currency, but claimed it was his right to do so (cf. Head and Etheridge, The Neighborhood Mint, p. 56).

[3] Head and Etheridge, *The Neighborhood Mint*, p. 79, quoting correspondence from autumn 1839 to early summer 1840.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 80-81, quoting correspondence.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 81.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 82. This provides the unusual instance in which an 1840-D $5 with a rotated reverse can now be attributed to a specific day date for coinage.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 84.

Skipping through the 1840s

At the risk of writing an entire *book* on the Dahlonega Mint, I will gloss over the events of the next two decades, mentioning only a few highlights. Conflicts of interest, personnel problems, account discrepancies, difficulties with dies, and more—all took place.

Some question arose as to whether slaves were employed on the Dahlonega staff, as reflected in a letter from J.L. Riddell, coiner and refiner at the New Orleans Mint, to J.M. Kennedy, superintendent at New Orleans. Dated May 21, 1841, the contents included this:

> The employment of slave labor in the melting department of the [New Orleans] Mint has, for a considerable time, been a subject of reflection with me, and I am convinced that its partial introduction is practicable and would be attended with good results.

Riddell went on to state that money could be saved by paying slaves less for their wages and nothing at all for overtime work. Moreover, slaves could work "over hot furnaces far better than whites [who] may generally wish to leave during the summer." The slaves would be furnished with clothing without pockets, to prevent thievery, and would be monitored by a foreman. "All this would be impracticable with white laborers. They will not submit to these restrictions, nor is it to be asked of them." Further, "I am informed that for some time past the melter and refiner of the Dahlonega Mint has employed slaves as laborers."

However, the allegation was not true, at least not for the refining, assay, and coining processes. However, slaves were occasionally used outside of the regular activities, in such jobs as removing trash and handling supplies. R.W. Julian wrote:[1]

> Five workmen, the number allowed by law, were employed at this mint at the monthly wage of $60. Slaves were used only on rare occasions, probably due to official dislike of the practice.

A significant proportion of the inhabitants of Georgia were slaves at the time, but as Mint appropriations were largely doled out in the North, the use of slaves in the internal operations would have raised complaints.[2]

Appointed as superintendent by President Tyler in April 1843, Major James Fairlie Cooper was on the job in May. On November 15, 1845, Superintendent Cooper sent a "small stone 7 grains in weight, said to be a diamond," to Director Patterson in Philadelphia. It belonged to John G. Nelson, and had been found in Hall County. Patterson tested it, found it to weigh 9.04 grains (2.9 carats), and to be valuable. Patterson took it to a meeting of the Philosophical Society and found a buyer for $30, Isaac Philips. Nelson was very pleased. Sensing a bonanza in the offing, Philips traveled to Georgia with his son Barnet and poked around where the diamond had been found, but located nothing worthwhile. Years later in 1851 in *New Varieties of Gold and Silver Coins*, by Jacob R. Eckfeldt and William E. Dubois, noted that a similar specimen was on view in the Mint cabinet and referred to the earlier find:

> No. 4. *Georgia Diamonds.*—One of these, found in Hall County, Georgia, was shown at this mint in November 1845. Weight, 6 8/10 grains; about 2 1/6 diamond carats. Specific gravity, 3.54. Sold in the rough state for $40.

In November 1845, James Knox Polk was elected president, replacing Tyler. A Democrat, Polk was cast in the mold of Andrew Jackson. Former Dahlonega superintendent Joseph J. Singleton, who had been out of office since being replaced by Paul Rossignol in March 1841, mounted a letter-writing and petition campaign to regain the office, hoping that political winds would now blow in his favor. Some snide remarks were made concerning the integrity of the incumbent, Superintendent Cooper. Among his alleged offenses were playing cards on Sunday and keeping a tavern with an attached gambling room. William E. Derrick, who had served as clerk under Rossignol, had even *seen* Cooper playing cards on Sunday and signed an affidavit to that effect.

To move forward in the narrative of the Dahlonega Mint—for it is all too easy to dwell on such incidents, of which the foregoing is but a tiny sample.

A letter, datelined Dahlonega, April 30, 1848, described the region, its gold, and the branch mint. Only a small part is quoted here:[3]

> The deposit gold is extracted from the gravel by means of a simple machine called a rocker, which merely shifts and washes out the metal. The vein gold is brought to light by means of what is called a pounding mill, which reduces the rock to the consistency of sand, when the ore is separated by the use of quicksilver.
>
> The mint establishment is quite large, and has a commanding appearance. It was erected in 1837, at an expense of $70,000, and the machinery costs $30,000. It gives employment to nine men, who receive for their services, collectively $12,000. The Superintendent is

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[1] R.W. Julian, "The Dahlonega Mint: 1843-1847," *Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine*, July 1967, p. 1242.

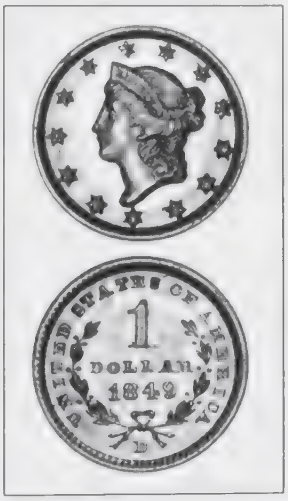
[2] Prior to their expulsion from Georgia in 1838, certain prosperous Cherokees also held slaves. Dahlonega Mint records reveal no "problem" with slavery in the area, and it did not seem to be a matter of discussion, at least not in official channels.

[3] Published in the *National Intelligencer;* reprinted in *Hunt's Merchant Magazine and Commercial Review*, Vol. 19, July, 1848.

> J.F. Cooper, (son of the famous actor,) the Coiner is D.H. Mason, who has a very interesting cabinet of materials, and the Assayer is J.L. Todd. The Dahlonega Branch Mint and the one located at Charlotte, N.C., are the only ones which coin the gold on the very spot where it is found.
>
> The New Orleans Branch, as well as the mother mint in Philadelphia, are chiefly occupied with foreign ores. Of the two first mentioned, Dahlonega thus far has been the most successful, the coinage in one year having amounted to $600,000. At the present time, however, the business of this mint is said to be on the wane. The coinage of the branch mints is uniform with that of the mother mint, and it is all systematically tested there. It thus appears that the whole establishment is a branch of the Treasury Department.
>
> The smallest amount of ore received at the Dahlonega mint has to be worth $100. When the miner has obtained a sufficient amount, he takes it to the mint and receives the allotted sum. The operation of coining is performed by the power of steam, and may be briefly described by the words rolling, drawing, cutting, and stamping. Some of the Dahlonega gold is said to be as pure as any in the world, but it is commonly alloyed with silver; and yet silver ore is no where found in this section. The value of pure gold is one dollar per pennyweight; and every genuine American eagle is made to contain one-twentieth of silver and one-twentieth of copper.

The 1849 Gold Dollar

On June 6 and 7, 1849, dies for a new gold denomination, the dollar, were sent to Dahlonega from Philadelphia. Preparations for minting gold dollars had begun by April, when adjustments and testing were done with collars and other apparatus. The milling machine proved inadequate for the small diameter of the dollar, and Superintendent Cooper wrote to Patterson to request that an old machine used to mill half dime planchets, which had been seen during a visit by Dahlonega workman Valentine Hodgson, be sent to Georgia. On June 6 certain new equipment was sent, and arrived on July 7, but the milling machine was not the one that Hodgson had remembered.



On July 12, Cooper wrote to Patterson:

> I am enabled to report to you the first coinage of gold dollars at this Mint and to send you two specimens of our coin.... All were desirous of giving me the honor of uttering the first gold dollar in Georgia before the arrival of my successor in this office.

Eager to expedite the circulation of the new coins, Cooper placed an advertisement in the *Dahlonega Watchman:*

> GOLD DOLLARS. Depositors of gold bullion requiring payments in these coins can now and hereafter be accommodated.

Although the initial rush of interest resulted in 21,588 tiny gold dollars being struck with D mintmarks, the denomination did not become popular, and thereafter mintages declined. The last year of issue was the 1861-D, the focal point and soon-to-be-encountered "adventure" subject of the present narrative.

The Dahlonega Mint in 1851

A reporter for the *Charleston News* visited the branch mint in 1851, and filed a story which included these comments. At the time a lot of gold bullion from *California* was being processed at Dahlonega:[1]

> **California Bullion Deposited**
>
> In the laboratory the correspondent of the *News* witnessed the decomposition of a lot of California gold, which contained a quantity of silver. By this process the whole was converted into a fluid in a large glass vessel, and by pouring in certain acids, for which the silver had an affinity, is collected like flakes of curdled milk, and falls to the bottom.
>
> The liquid then being canted off, another acid was applied, and the gold in turn precipitated. In this way the separation was complete and both metals, placed in the scales together, after being dried, had their original joint weight, saving a very small fraction.
>
> **The Officers of the Mint**
>
> Dr. Stephenson, formerly of Virginia, presides in the Assayer's Department, with eminent skill and satisfaction. His labors are nice and beautiful.
>
> The superintendent acts as treasurer to the mint, and is also commissioned a subtreasurer of the United States. It is his duty to purchase and pay for all the gold bullion presented. He receives and disburses all moneys, is the chief officer, and detects all the operations of the mint.
>
> The coiner performs the duties of both melter and refiner. He receives the gold from the treasurer, and prepares it of suitable firmness to make coin.

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[1] Subtitles added. Reprinted in *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine and Commercial Review*, Vol. 24, January to June, Inclusive, 1851, pp. 740-741. Prefatory note: "We are indebted to an intelligent correspondent of the *Charleston News*, for the subjoined account of the operations of the branch Mint of the United States at Dahlonega. The writer visited the mint in person, and the most implicit confidence may be placed in the accuracy of his statements. In transferring the subject matter of the letter to the pages of the *Merchants' Magazine*, we have taken the liberty of making a few verbal alterations, at the same time retaining not only the substance, but the language, of the writer almost verbatim et literatim."

To possess this quality, it must contain not less than 898 parts in the thousand, nor more than 902 parts of pure gold. It is then delivered to the coiner, who proceeds to have the same made into coin. The half-eagle must weigh 129 grains, the quarter-eagle 64-1/2 grains, and the gold dollar 24 4/5th grains. A variation of one-quarter of a grain is allowed in each piece from these standards; but the piece must be so arranged, that in one thousand half-eagles they must not exceed a variation of thirty-six grains. In one thousand quarter-eagles a variation of twenty-four grains is allowed; and in one thousand gold dollars, twelve grains. The bullion undergoes thirteen operations to get it into coin....

Financial Arrangements

The whole expense of building and supporting the mint is borne by the Government, in order to preserve a sound and uniform currency for the people. Not a cent is charged depositors for coining their bullion. The whole amount coined at the Dahlonega Mint since its establishment in 1837, to 1st January, 1851, has been three million nine hundred and ninety-five thousand dollars, on which the expense has been about three and a half per cent. No silver coin is made at this mint. The coinage has been $250,000 for the last two years each. The receipts of bullion in the months of January and February, 1851, have exceeded the same months in 1850 by $15,000. With its present force and machinery, the mint can coin $3,000,000 per annum, or $10,000 per day.

The assayer has one assistant detailed from the laborers. The coiner three: his melter and two assistant coiners. The fifth man is the machinist, whose duty it is to keep the machinery in order, to mend the breakage, and to fit up the dies. The clerk assists the superintendent, keeps the books, &c. Depositors coming to the mint will seldom be detained more than one day, and never more than four days.

The present officers are, A.W. Redding, superintendent and treasurer; Robert H. Moore, coiner; Matthew F. Stevenson, assayer; Henry B. Williams, clerk; William Rhodes, machinist; F.D Boortfield, J.E. Howell, Wm. G. Lawrence, and William Warwick, laborers.

Both officers and subordinates work hard. Like a steamship in port after a voyage, there is plenty of fixing up to be done all the time. Honor to the men who execute the trust faithfully. There has never been a defalcation in the Dahlonega Mint. Before the present officers came in, the superintendents have successively been Dr. Joseph J. Singleton, Paul Rossignol, and James A. Cooper. Coiners, David H. Mason and John D. Field; and the assayers, Joseph W. Farnum and Isaac L. Todd.

Dawn of the Civil War

George Kellogg was appointed as superintendent of the Dahlonega Mint in 1860, and his term began on October 1, 1860. He was an avowed States' Rights Democrat, meaning that he took his guidance from the wishes of fellow Georgians, not politicians in far-off Washington. At the time the will of Georgia and of most of the rest of the South was quite different from that of the congressional majority. "No submission to the North," the inscription on a popular token (Adventure No. 34 discussed earlier) claimed. Matters were coming to a head with the presidential election in the offing. Lincoln was detested in the South, and if he were to be chosen, no one could predict what would happen to the country.

Accompanying the new superintendent in his Dahlonega posting was his son, Henry C. Kellogg, who replaced as clerk Robert Patton, the son of the outgoing superintendent. Nepotism was alive and well in the various branches of the Mint service at the time, particularly at Philadelphia where a succession of Eckfeldt, Dubois, Patterson, Moore, Snowden and other names reflected family relationships. At the time of the change in officers at Dahlonega, Howell Cobb was secretary of the Treasury in Washington—but not for long, as he would resign on December 8 and become an important figure in the affairs of the Confederate States of America.

Between July 1859 and February 1861, close to $58,000 in bullion from the Pikes Peak district (as it was called) was deposited at the Dahlonega facility, and in the last quarter of 1860 accounted for most of the coin production, this being at the beginning of Kellogg's term.[1] In addition, metal was brought from South Carolina and a few other places, including $145.14 from Salt Lake City, as per the sources cited below.

The following deposits were made during *fiscal year* 1861, which commenced on July 1, 1860, and continued through June 30, 1861, but with incomplete records after February 28, 1861:

North Carolina gold: $813
South Carolina gold: $2,067
Georgia gold: $22,182
California gold: $4,214
Pikes Peak area (Colorado) gold: $32,772
Salt Lake City gold:[2] $145

Georgia Secedes

On January 16, 1861, a state convention was held to determine the political course of events. The secession of neighboring South Carolina from the Union on December 20, 1860, had created a new pride in that district, and many other southerners were eager to follow suit. The concept of a united South, without interference from the North, presented the possibility of a dream coming true. At the gathering, delegate Benjamin Hamilton from Lumpkin County, home of Dahlonega, suggested that it might be worth considering "any changes in device on the coins hereafter to be made at the Mint in Dahlonega." Several days later, on January 19, Georgia seceded. However, no action was taken at the time to change the direction or operations of the Mint. Superintendent Kellogg made it known that he warmly endorsed the state's action, but also wanted to maintain his communication with the federal government.

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[1] R.W. Julian, "Lack of Gold, Civil War Spell 'Finis" for Georgia Mint," *Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine*, June 1968, p. 1697. • Adventure No. 11 discusses other use of Pikes Peak gold. As you can see, a lot of these things tie together!

[2] Presumably gold shipped from Salt Lake City, but mined in other locations.

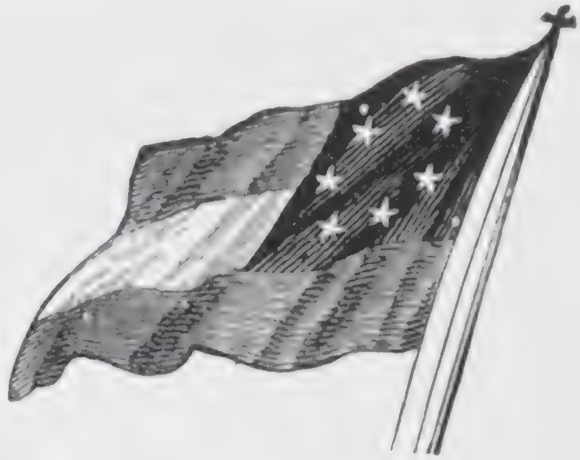
On February 22, 1861, Superintendent Kellogg wrote to Howell Cobb (who had been secretary of Treasury in Washington until his resignation on December 8, and now was with the Confederate government in Montgomery, Alabama). He stated that as "Georgia did not demand and take possession of the Mint" he was still filing reports with the government. However, he was very willing to be retained in the same position under the change and was ready to "resign at any time and be commissioned under the Southern Confederacy."

In the meantime, the Dahlonega Mint continued to do business as usual—incoming deposits being rather small. Affairs at the Dahlonega Mint were slow early in calendar year 1861. The final report made by Superintendent Kellogg to Director James Ross Snowden was dated February 28 and advised that coinage consisted of just 1,597 half eagles, seemingly about evenly divided between the months of January and February. As the single coining press on hand could turn out 50 to 60 pieces per minute, at the slowest rate this was equivalent to about *16 minutes* worth of coining time for each of the two months!

By that time, two pairs of dies had been received (on January 7) for each of the three gold denominations, the $1, $2.50, and $5. As none had been called for, none of the lower values were coined.

Under the Confederate Flag

On March 1, 1861, Benjamin Hamilton, who had attended the secession meeting in January, wrote to C.G. Memminger, treasurer of the Confederacy, requesting that the Dahlonega Mint be kept in operation as it was essential to local miners. To do this, appropriations for salaries would have to be made. Again, he suggested that the coin designs could be changed. Soon thereafter, Hamilton proposed a plan in which he would personally take charge of the Mint for $5,000 per year, and would dismiss nearly everyone, putting his own son in as clerk (tradition here!), and making do with Lewis W. Quillian, a recent hire, to do the assaying for just $500. He estimated incoming deposits for the next year to be $100,000 to $150,000, on what basis not stated (in the two most recent years, the annual deposits had been below $70,000). Hamilton, who is not known to have had any coining experience, was dreaming.


The first Confederate States of America flag. (Portrait from *Perley's Reminiscences,* Vol. II, 1886)

On March 4, 1861, the Congress of the Seceding States considered and passed a resolution forwarded by T.R.R. Cobb,[1] of Georgia, calling for the New Orleans and Dahlonega mints (Charlotte wasn't mentioned, or at least did not appear in the news accounts seen by the present writer) to remain open during the worsening crisis with the Union. When complete secession had been accomplished, these facilities were to be used to strike coins for the South. A contemporary account noted that there had been rumors of the closing of the Dahlonega Mint, possibly due to reduced output in recent years. Under this proposal, the Dahlonega Mint was intended to shine brightly in the affairs of what would become known as the Confederate States of America.

In March coins were struck from bullion on hand and incoming deposits. Historian Clair M. Birdsall estimates that 1,600 to 1,700 additional 1861-D $5 pieces were made during that time.[2]

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[1] Brother of Howell Cobb.

[2] Clair M. Birdsall, *The United States Branch Mint at Dahlonega, Georgia,* p. 41.

On April 8, 1861, militiamen under orders from Governor Joseph E. Brown finally seized the mint, thus definitively ending federal operations. The mint continued its business, more or less as usual, as was done (at a slightly later time) at Charlotte. Correspondence reveals that Superintendent George Kellogg was desirous of completing his reports to the United States Treasury Department, while at the same time seeking to solidify his position as superintendent of the Dahlonega Mint under the Confederacy. The last day of transactions at the facility seems to have been May 14.

Letters were exchanged with Memminger, who informed Kellogg on May 16 that the Mint would not remain open, not even at the estimated cost of operation of $6,000 per year. On the 27th, Kellogg suggested that four rooms in the building and the assay equipment be made available for someone to operate for the convenience of local depositors.

In June, an accounting was made of the mint and fixtures, and on June 11 the silver and gold bullion from Dahlonega was received in South Carolina by Benjamin C. Pressley, earlier the United States assistant treasurer at Charleston and now the Confederate assistant treasurer at the same place.

Although no specific records are known to exist, it is likely that certain of the bullion at the mint, plus incoming deposits, were converted into about $3,000 face value of coins in April, probably consisting of gold dollars (a denomination not coined earlier in the year) and more half eagles. The present writer suggests a coinage of 1,000 to 1,500 dollars, leaving a balance of $1,500 to $2,000 of gold converted into half eagles, or 300 to 400 additional $5 pieces (when added to the pieces struck in March, this brings the estimate up to about 2,000 to 2,100). Birdsall suggests about 1861-D 3,000 gold dollars and, for all post February half eagle coinage, about 1,600 to 1,700 pieces.

Whereas the 1861-D half eagles were produced by the federal as well as the secession interests, the 1861-D gold dollars are uniquely a Confederate issue.

Alas, for numismatic posterity, the continuing operations of the Dahlonega Mint were never more than a footnote in Confederate history. The last day of regular business seems to have been May 14th, after which the gold bullion, coins, and certain other items were given to the Treasury of the Confederate States of America. On May 31 the facility was officially closed. Superintendent Kellogg remained for a time to wind down affairs, bring accounts up to date, and conclude other matters. On June 28 he left the building in the hands of a caretaker. All was finished.

Elder Seeks Coins in Dahlonega in 1930

New York dealer Thomas L. Elder visited Dahlonega in March 1930 to see what he might find.[1] By that time the 1861-D gold dollar and most other "D" issues had become collectors' items. Excerpts:

Hidden in the Hills of Georgia

> The current idea of the remoteness of the town of Dahlonega was well founded in 1930, when the writer paid it a visit lasting several days. The place rests on a plateau, one of several plateaus, and stands some 1,500 feet above sea level in the Blue Ridge Mountains, a part of the Appalachian system. The place was not so easy to get to even in 1930, for don't forget that the hey-day of Dahlonega was the day of the pack horse, Conestoga wagon and Indian trail. In fact, it is reported that all of the gold-bearing lands near Dahlonega were formerly Indian lands.
>
> The roads leading from Gainesville and Dahlonega were then proverbially bad. "Don't come until April," wrote my good friend Col. W.B. Townsend, editor of the Dahlonega *Nugget* and Dahlonega's leading citizen in 1930. But I disregarded the advice of this town sage and traveled, plodded, or whatever you may call it, in March of that year.
>
> With bag in hand, and filled with some degree of numismatic hopes, I left the town of Tyron, N.C., in good form, and going by way of Southern Railroad duly reached Gainesville, Ga. My taxi-man drove me from the depot to the new post office, a mile from the railroad, where, parked near a platform at the back of the building, I noticed the mud-covered, travel-stained auto which was to carry me, other passengers and the mail toward Dahlonega. A night of rain had clogged the roads with mud. We crossed the Chattahoochee and then, on account of washouts, had to make a laborious eight-mile detour. Heavy bags of mail were fastened to the hood of the car, and there were several passengers who boarded the car at Gainesville. On the front seat sat two stout men—the sturdy driver and an assistant the use of whom I was soon to learn. Lakes of mud and water covered the roads from the start, and Georgia, with the help of nature, was doing all possible to uphold its reputation for dirt roads.

Dahlonega!

> Tediously we drove to the foot of a hill some half a mile in length, while the car worked valiantly to uphold its reputation for taking hard knocks. We plowed slowly along while the engine puffed and snorted something like a mad bull.... We, with something akin to a feeling of triumph, came finally to the last long hill in a brilliant glow of sunset and, with passengers almost on our laps, moved forward into Dahlonega, toward the main village square.

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[1] Account published in the March 1939 issue of *The Numismatist*. Subtitles added.

Before us loomed the fine old courthouse, standing since 1834, long before the day of the government mint, and then we stopped at the post office. Colonel Townsend was there to get his mail, and was evidently expecting me. I greeted him and took his photograph. Thinking, as a coin collector, to pick up some rare specimens at Dahlonega, I had sent a small advertisement to the colonel, which he inserted in his unique newspaper, *The Nugget*. I had asked prospective owners of coins to meet me at the editor's office. But the colonel, evidently scenting possible trouble and embarrassments to him, had changed the wording to read to meet me at the small hotel where I was to stop, and to which I was directed upon my arrival.

Aha! An 1861-D Gold Dollar!

There I found my advent was already known, and I noticed a line-up of some half a dozen natives and farmers standing, one behind the other, with expressions of anticipation on their faces, waiting to show the great coin collector their coins. It is true one old man produced a poor and badly worn example of the very rare 1861-D mint gold dollar. He asked $50, enough when the condition was considered. I did not secure the piece. Some other distant coin merchant had made him the offer by mail, sight unseen.

A careful old farmer was the most interesting visitor. He produced a fruit jar of glass with coins in it. These coins were just current $10 and $20 gold pieces, at the time of no premium value. "They say thar's going to be a big war," he said, "and I'm told the best way to save gold coins is to bury them. I keep this money of mine buried in the ground so it will be safe." With that he uncovered the jar and poured out his coins, which I did not buy.

Others showed more or less worthless coins. My fame soon spread and a farmer driving a wagon across the public square stopped me and showed me two D mint coins, one a gold dollar dated 1849, the other a rather common $5 gold piece. These he informed me were struck at the Dahlonega Mint and he wouldn't sell them.

Visiting the Mint Site

Then I began to look around the town and found the site of the former old U.S. mint was occupied by the North Georgia Agricultural College. Nothing remained to remind us of the Georgia mint except the flywheel lying prostrate on the ground....

The old mint at Dahlonega was destroyed by fire in 1878. I found in an old newspaper in Colonel Townsend's office a print of the old mint building, and counted 18 windows on its face, with two large circular stone pillars at its door. The mint was of two stories and built of brick, with a foundation some five feet high of gray stone, which gave the structure a substantial appearance....

The 1861-D Gold Dollar Today

As might be expected, the 1861-D gold dollar, being the only "pure" Confederate issue of this quaint little mint in Georgia, is in great demand today.

The number struck is not known, and estimates have ranged from below 1,000 to "between 2,750 and 3,250 pieces," the latter being the range given by Clair M. Birdsall.[1] David Akers gives his estimate as 1,200 to 1,500 pieces.

Of all gold coins in the American series, there are few if any that have more history and romance than the 1861-D gold dollar. Its story is marvelous to contemplate:

In any event, dies for the 1861-D gold dollar were put into a coining press, and some pieces were run off. As there had been no 1861-D coinage prior to the occupation of the mint by Georgia forces, *de facto* all 1861-D gold dollars are really 1861-D *Confederate States of America* gold dollars. The pieces are believed to have been struck in April, the same month that Confederate troops took over from their brethren, the troops of Georgia. Shortly thereafter, the Dahlonega Mint ceased coinage operations, never to be reopened for this purpose.

I estimate that today about 45 to 55 pieces exist in worn grades, typically EF or AU and with irregular surfaces due to the lack of finesse in the coining procedures. A handful of pieces—perhaps five to nine—can be described as Mint State. Grading is subjective, and one person's AU can be another's Mint State. In recent years, certain Dahlonega (and also Charlotte) gold dollars have been graded more liberally than they were years ago. By any standard, an 1861-D gold dollar in Mint State *or close to it* is a first-class rarity and object of numismatic desire. In addition to the preceding, some damaged coins exist.

All told, the population remaining is certainly fewer than 100 coins, and probably below the 75 mark.

Although I do not personally own an 1861-D gold dollar, I have "collected" much information about it over the years. Some early mentions and offerings are given in the chronicle below—a tiny fraction of what could be mentioned. Needless to say, the 1861-D has attracted a lot of attention over the years.

Selected Early Mentions of the 1861-D

- **1893: *Mint Marks.*** In his treatise of this title, Augustus G. Heaton commented about Dahlonega

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[1] *The United States Branch Mint at Dahlonega, Georgia*, p. 64; also detailed discussion in Section III.

Mint gold dollars in general and the 1861-D in particular: "The precious Dahlonega or 'D' mint issues are 13, of the years 1849, '50, '51, '52, '53, '54, '55, '56, '57, '58, '59, '60, and '61. Of these the 1852 and '53 are rare, 1854, '57 and '58 are very rare; 1860 exceedingly rare; 1855 and '56 excessively rare, and of 1861, which is not in the *Mint Report*, but two pieces are known, one being in our possession."

• **1896-01: Transaction disclosed:** In *The Numismatist*, January 1896, it was reported that a Detroit member of the American Numismatic Association (Isaac M. Bates, although his name was not given) had bought an 1861-D gold dollar from an Ohio collector, then sold to John M. Clapp, of Tidioute, Pennsylvania, for $100, who came to Detroit to pick it up.[1]

• **1903-08:** Augustus G. Heaton contributed an article to *The Numismatist*, "Eccentricities of Coin Valuation," which stated that, among other coins, such gold rarities as "the S mint dollar of 1870, the D mint dollars of 1855, 1856, and 1861, would raise the numismatic temperature of an auction room to fever heat."

• **1904-05:** In *The Numismatist*, The St. Louis Stamp & Coin Company advertised the availability of the collection of H.C. Beerman, of Atlanta, Georgia, "costing over $1,100. It is rich in rarities of all the U.S. series. Send us your want list and we will quote you low prices. P.S: The 1792 Birch Cent, 1861-D U.S. gold dollar and 1798 over 7 eagle are in stock today. Let us hear from you."

• **1907-03: David S. Wilson Collection** (S.H. Chapman), Lot 305: "1861-D Extremely Fine. Only four specimens known. The first time a specimen has been offered at auction." Realized $280. • The 1861-D was very well known by 1907 and was perhaps the most famous of all branch mint coins of *any* series. Of course, it would be interesting to find an earlier auction listing—but so far, this is the first encountered in the auction forum.

• **1911-03: 48th Public Sale, William H. Woodin Collection** (Thomas L. Elder), Lot 874: "1861-D. The rarest of gold dollars! Coinage not given in mint record, so it can only be guessed at, but judging by the number of pieces which have been offered at public sale the piece is several times rarer than the 1875, or even the 1870-S.[2] This is one of the finest examples extant, being Extremely Fine and the record of $280, made at the Wilson Sale, should here be exceeded." Realized $170.

• **1913-05: Malcolm N. Jackson Collection** (U.S. Coin Co., Inc.), Lot 367: "1861-D, Very Fine, some luster. Excessively rare, only a few specimens known." Realized $151. • This was one of the highlights among mintmarked issues in the Jackson sale.

• **1915-03:** ***Bulletin*** (U.S. Coin Co.), fixed price offering: "1861-D Extremely Fine and sharp impression, edge tested in two places. Excessively rare."

• **1917-04-13: Henry C. Miller Collection** (Thomas L. Elder), Lot 447: "1861-D Unusually sharp impression, strongest we have yet seen. Two small test cuts on edge. A very rare coin with a sale record to about $350. Rated the rarest U.S. gold dollar." • Wonder if this is the same specimen offered by the U.S. Coin Co. in 1915?

• **1918-00:** ***Choice U.S. Gold, Silver and Copper Coins*** (Elmer S. Sears), Fixed price list: "1861-D Very Fine. Excessively rare. Probably the rarest gold dollar. $175."

• **1918-10: H.O. Granberg, Joseph Barnet, and J.A. Crewitt Collections** (Henry Chapman), Lot 312: "1861 Dahlonega Mint. Uncirculated mint lustre. Probably the finest specimen known. Excessively rare:" • *Another:* Lot 437: "1861 Dahlonega Mint. Extremely Fine. Nick on rev. rim which occurs on about all the specimens known of this great variety. From the Gable Collection [sold in 1914].

• **1919-01: Public Auction Sale** (Thomas L. Elder), Lot 402: "1861-D Dahlonega Mint. Unusually boldly struck piece, the date and mint mark Very Fine and strong. Extremely Fine. I value this coin at not less than $250. It has records at private sale of $400. I got $230 for one myself not nearly so fine as this one. The D. S. Wilson specimen sold for $280."

• **1920-01: Collection of Ancient and Modern Coins** (Fred E. Merritt), Lot 222: "1861-D Very strong impression. Extremely Fine. Excessively rare." • Merritt was a fleeting figure on the stage of American coin auction cataloguers.

• **1920-07: Public Auction Sale** (Thomas L. Elder), Lot 482: "1861-D Mint. Two slight test cuts on edge otherwise Uncirculated and sharp. Extremely rare. Probably not over 12 or 15 known." • The 1915 U.S. Coin Co. specimen coming up again? In the absence of photographic illustrations, pedigree links can only be guessed.

• **1922-12: H.E. Rawson, Dr. A. de Yoanna, and David Strasser Collections** (B. Max Mehl), Lot 72: "1861-D The rarest known gold dollar. As near Uncirculated as this great rarity is undoubtedly known. A pin point, hardly noticeable nick above 1 on reverse. In order to 'play safe' I catalog this specimen as Extremely Fine, but I'm quite certain that it will readily be accepted as Uncirculated. The obverse is strongly struck, with full mint luster, only the highest portions show the barest touch of circulation. The reverse is evenly well struck up, with a nice even mint luster surface. Undoubtedly one of the finest, if not the finest, specimen of this excessively rare coin, which has a record at private sale of $350.00, although since then specimens have sold for less." Realized $165. • This early listing by Mehl reflects a great deal of the cataloguer's personality and describes the coin in a manner that is very appealing, this being quite different from the normal basic notations of the era.

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[1] Generations later this coin was described as Mint State by the present writer and was sold in the Eliasberg U.S. Gold Coin Collection sale, October 1982.

[2] At the time the 1870-S (see later citations) was considered to be a formidable rarity, a status which it retains today. Elder viewed the 1870-S as being rarer than the 1875, a status which it also retains at the present time. However, in the overall context of numismatics past and present, the 1870-S has received very little press in comparison to either the 1861-D or the 1875.

• **1923-10: Charles Wellinger Collection** (B. Max Mehl), Lot 53: "1861-D Mint. Practically Uncirculated, with considerable mint luster. Just about equal to or probably better than the specimen in the Rawson sale which brought $165.00. The rarest known gold dollar and one of the rarest of all gold coins. It has an old record of $350." Realized $81.

• **1926-02: Cary, McGill, Heaton, Havemeyer, Kinports, Craddock, Little, Morris, and Haller Collections** (Thomas L. Elder), Lot 2843: "1861-D Very Fine. A very rare item. DeWitt Smith paid $280 for one. I got $230 for another in one of my sales. Mr. Smith regarded it as the rarest of gold dollars. There is no reason why, in this era of the 65 cent dollar, that this coin should not sell for at least $300."

• **1927-12: Dr. Daniel W. Valentine Collection** (Thomas L. Elder) Lot 129: "1861-D About Uncirculated. Excessively rare. We sold one once for $230. Has records over $275."

• **1929-04: George W. Fash, Joseph F. Atkinson, and Carrie E. Perkins Collections** (Thomas L. Elder), Lot 1342: "1861 Dahlonega. Uncirculated. Very rare."

• **1931-04: Morris Collection** (B. Max Mehl), Lot 446: "1861-D An unusually choice specimen of the rarest known gold dollar. Very Fine, sharp. Only barest touch of circulation. As much as $350 was once paid for a specimen of this rarity." Realized $115.

• **1931-12: F.H. Knoop Collection** (B. Max Mehl), Lot 1056: "1861-D The rarest known gold dollar. Fine to Very Fine; the date and mint mark unusually bold. Excessively rare." Realized $72.50.

• **1932-11: R. Taylor Collection** (B. Max Mehl), Lot 239: "1861-D, Strictly Fine to Very Fine. Considered the rarest known gold dollar and at one time brought over $300, and is still extremely rare." Realized $75. • Mehl seems to indicate that additional specimens had been discovered in recent times. And, indeed, this was true—for competitor Thomas L. Elder had mounted a strong publicity campaign in recent years, mailing notices to bank tellers and others to seek scarce gold coins, including any and all gold dollars (all were worth a premium), gold coins of the 1795-1834 era, and other desiderata.

• **1937-04: George M. Agurs Collection** (B. Max Mehl), Lot 1674: "1861-D Fine and about as choice as this rarity comes. At one time this coin sold up to $300. Since then a few additional specimens have been discovered, but the coin is still a rarity." Realized $87.50. • Perhaps Mehl, who at the time was busy selling his *Star Rare Coin Encyclopedia* and engaging in a nationwide publicity campaign, simply instructed a secretary, "Copy and modify slightly what I said about the Taylor coin in 1932."

• **1937-09: F.M. Needham and A.R. Herrick Collections** (Thomas L. Elder), Lot 1423: "1861. $1.00. D. Mint. Very Fine. Excessively rare. Only a small coinage. This coin has records up to $280 at auction sale. We sold one for $240 ourselves in a sale on East 23rd Street years ago. DeWitt Smith told me to bid $275 for it at the D. S. Wilson sale at Phila."

• **1938-03: Samuel H. McVitty Collection** (B. Max Mehl), Lot 181: "1861-D Fine obverse, with Very Fine reverse; bold mint letter. At one time considered as the rarest gold dollar known, with old record over $300." Realized $90. • By inference, Mehl now considers some other dollar to be rarer than the 1861-D, that other coin being the 1860-D (if you are interested, check contemporary Mehl citations for 1860-D).

• **1939-06: Alex. J. Rosborough Collection** (B. Max Mehl), Lot 758: "1861-D, Last year of issue at this mint, and of extreme rarity. Very Fine. At one time it sold up to $350, but since then a few specimens have been discovered, which of course brought its value down where today it sells for about $150." Realized $105.

• **1939-10: 45th Catalogue Sale** (Barney Bluestone), Lot 962: "1861-D Strictly Very Fine. Excessively Rare." • Bluestone, located in Syracuse, New York, was a prominent coin auctioneer in the 1930s and 1940s.

• **1939-11: William B. Hale Collection** (B. Max Mehl), Lot 716: "1861-D The highest portions of head show slightest cabinet friction otherwise the coin is Uncirculated with nearly full mint luster. Mr. Hale paid $250 for this coin many years ago. It is not that valuable today, although it is listed up to $300. A recent auction record of $137.50." Realized $105.

• **1944-02: Belden E. Roach Collection** (B. Max Mehl), Lot 1104: "1861-D Uncirculated with full mint luster. The highest portions of Liberty head show just the barest touch of cabinet friction. Perfectly centered and well struck. A gem and of the highest rarity. An old record of over $300. Now listed at $225 in only Very Fine." Realized $237.50. • The coin market was heading up, up, up! It was the era of World War II when cash was aplenty and goods were scarce.

• **1944-12: J.F. Bell Collection** (Stack's), Lot 65: "1861-D Brilliant Uncirculated gem. Seldom do you see a pair so well matched in condition as this and the above.[1] Last year of issue. So rare." Realized $255.

• **1946-01: "World's Greatest Collection"** (F.C.C. Boyd Collection; Numismatic Gallery), Lot 65: "1861-D The rarest dollar in the Dahlonega series and the last date of the issue. Not quite as choice as the 1860 but easily Very Fine. We sold a choice specimen recently at $400. This one is in Very Fine condition." Realized $335.

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[1] Lot 64 was a gem 1860-D gold dollar.

• **1946-06: William Cutler Atwater Collection** (B. Max Mehl), Lot 2161: "1861-D. This date and mint gold dollar has always been considered the rarest known of the series.[1] This specimen is strictly Uncirculated with full brilliant mint luster. As is characteristic of all known specimens of this rarity, the U in UNITED STATES is not struck up, and the ICA in AMERICA is not as bold as the balance of the legend. The entire legend, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, is double-struck. I consider this the gem gold dollar of the collection. I do not recall handling or having seen an equal, and certainly not a better, specimen. Of the greatest rarity. Recent auction record for only a Very Fine specimen, $335. This one certainly worth much more. The *Mint Report* does not give a coinage record of it. Apparently, being the last year of mintage, so few specimens were struck that no record was made of it. The 1861-D gold dollars always give me a great thrill, as it recalls to my mind my first 'great discovery' and, incidentally, my first 'big sale.' I bought an 1861 gold dollar, which at that time were selling for about $1.50 to $2.00 each. Upon examination of the coin, I found it to be the 1861-D. Fortunately, I had a copy of Heaton's work on *Mint Marks*, and lo and behold I noted that only two specimens were known. I offered the coin to Mr. H.O. Granberg, who was then one of the leading, if not the leading collectors in the country, and received an offer of no less than $350, which, of course, I immediately accepted. It does not take a great deal of imagination to realize what that amount meant to me in those days and I might say, struggles. Since that incident I have made sales privately where the remittance ran into figures close to the six-figure mark, but I am yet to receive a remittance which would give me the thrill of that first $350 check. So you can hardly blame me if I still consider the 1861-D gold dollar my favorite coin." Realized $345.

• **1946-08: ANA Convention Sale** (Numismatic Gallery), Lot 1234: "1861-D. The last date of this issue and the rarest dollar in the Dahlonega series. A Very Fine specimen, well centered. January sale price. $335." Realized $250.

• **1947-06: Will W. Neil Collection** (B. Max Mehl), Lot 2360: "1861-D. Considered the rarest gold dollar, but I believe that there are slightly more specimens known of this rarity than there are of the 1860-D. The coin is Extremely Fine but it seems to have been slightly bent. There is a die break above and to right of the last figure 1 in date which appears to be another 1. This coin catalogs at $350 in Uncirculated." Realized $237.50.

• **1948-03: Memorable Collection** (Numismatic Gallery), Lot 65: "1861-D. The rarest of the Dahlonega dollars and the last date of the issue. One of the finest specimens we have seen. We sold a choice specimen to a famous California collector." Realized $245.

• **1950-05: Golden Jubilee Sale / Jerome Kern Collection** (B. Max Mehl), Lot 297: "1861-D. Practically Uncirculated with mint lustre. Was purchased by Mr. Kern as an Uncirculated specimen, which I believe it is. Variety with most of the letters in legend on obverse double-struck. As is usual with this rarity, the UN in UNITED is not struck up as boldly as the other letters in legend. A beautiful specimen of what is considered the rarest gold dollar. Record up to $350. A note accompanying this coin states that Mr. Kern paid $400. I believe this is as beautiful a specimen of this rarity as exists." Realized $337.50. • It is somewhat difficult to determine whether Mehl considered it to be "practically Uncirculated" or fully Uncirculated. Also, Mehl was back on track saying that the 1861-D was the rarest gold dollar, in contradistinction to what he had said in the 1947 Neil sale, etc.

• **1950-06: Adolphe Menjou Collection** (Numismatic Gallery), Lot 478: "1861-D Very Fine, the rarest of the Dahlonega Mint dollars. This is the last year of mintage at Dahlonega and no record was made of any gold dollars. We have sold the 1861 at private sale for $400, but for a superior specimen. This one is Very Fine."

• **1951-06: King Farouk Consignment** (B. Max Mehl),[2] Lot 1833: "1861-D. The rarest gold dollar of this mint and the rarest of the entire series of gold dollars. The coin is strictly Very Fine; but unfortunately it had a loop removed from upper edge, but it does not seem to impair the coin to any great extent. It is still worthy of a home in any collection. Catalogs $250 in Very Fine." Realized $200.

• **1956-03: 190th Auction Sale, Henry A. Sternberg, Lloyd Rogers, Louis L. Lincoln, Martin H. Burge, M.D., and Fred Landenberger Collections** (M.H. Bolender), Lot 1510: "1861-D Very Fine. The rarest known variety of the entire series of gold dollars. The exact number coined is unknown, as this was the last year at this mint, and so few were struck that no record was kept. As usual in all known specimens, the U in United is not struck up, and the n in United and ICA in America are not as bold as the balance of the legend. A very choice and attractive example of this great rarity." Realized $410. • Although just about *every* 1861-D gold dollar is miserably struck, few ever mentioned this "negative."

• **1956-04: Thomas G. Melish and Clinton W. Hester Collections** (A. Kosoff) Lot 1776: "1861-D This is the last year of the Dahlonega Mint operations. A top-grade Very Fine and rare as such. I have seen few as nice as this one. A few months ago I saw a better one and offered $750 for it but was turned down – can't say I blame him! This is undoubtedly one of the better known examples...." Realized $575. • I attended the sale, which was held in Indianapolis. It was an exciting event, with many record prices set—all of which proved to be bargains in later years.

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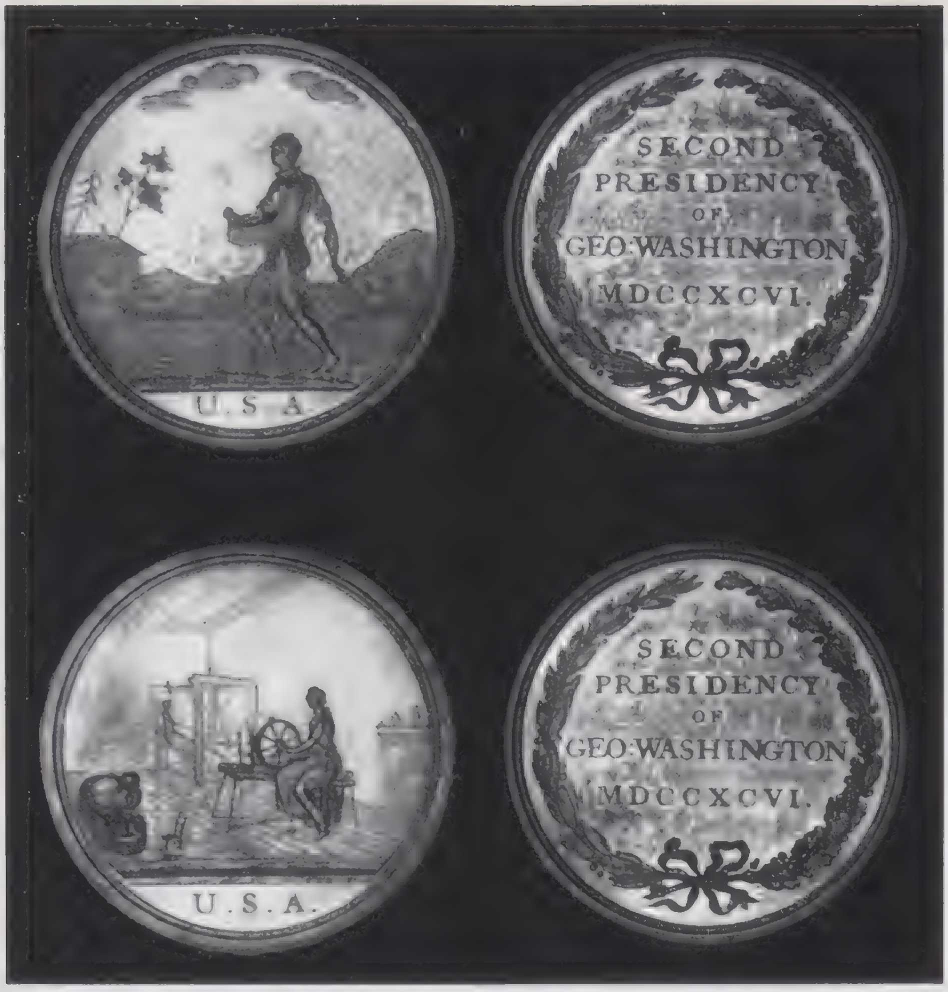
[1] Not always by Mehl, as for a time he had stated that the 1860-D was rarer. As was true of many if not all leading coin catalogue writers, there was so much to write and so many new coins and consignments to handle, that it was impossible to remember everything said earlier. The present writer (QDB) knows this from personal experience!

[2] This sale had Farouk's name on the cover, but included material from other sources. The Farouk Collection sale was held by Sotheby's in Cairo in 1954 and was not related to the Mehl offering.

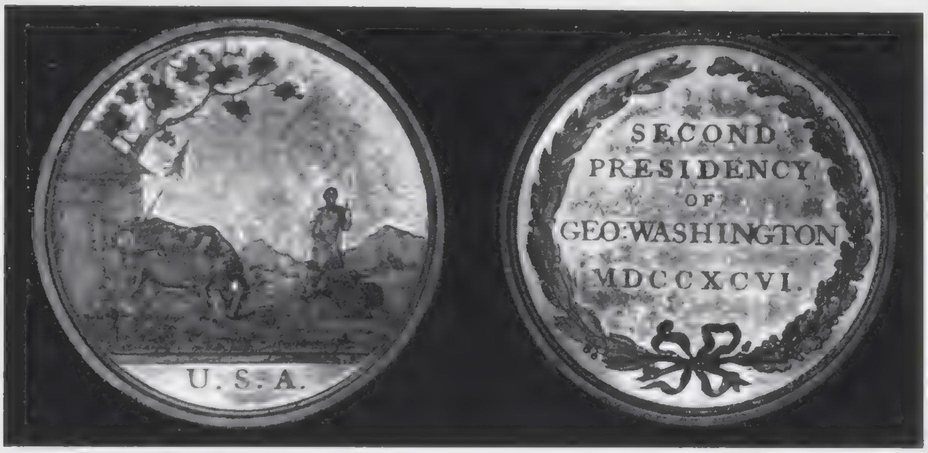
• **1956-08: Chi-ANA Convention Sale** (James F. Kelly), Lot 1618: "1861 D mint. Practically Uncirculated, one of the finest specimens known. Well struck for this date. Generally considered the rarest of the branch mint gold dollars. Valued by owner at $600. I personally believe it should bring considerably more." • This was an interesting sale as well—held in Chicago. Kelly, who enjoyed playing the role of showman, enjoyed presenting many gold rarities, of which the 1861-D gold dollar was just one.

And thus ends a string of quotations—which could be multiplied in size if *all* on hand were quoted. As the narrative of this "adventure" comes to a close, I have made the decision that I will never write a *book* specifically about this little coin. The preceding is probably about as much as anyone would care to read!


U.S.A.
SECOND PRESIDENCY OF GEO: WASHINGTON MDCCXCVI.
U.S.A.
SECOND PRESIDENCY OF GEO: WASHINGTON MDCCXCVI.

ADVENTURE NO. 48

INDIAN PEACE MEDALS FOR ALL SEASONS



Lewis and Clark, on their 1804-1804 exploring expedition through the newly acquired Louisiana Purchase, took a supply of these "Seasons medals" and presented them to Native Americans along the route. (From the Virgil Brand Collection)

The Robert P. King Collection

Often in the course of pursuing interesting numismatic items I have come across pieces which I can dream about, but never seriously hope to own. A prime example is the set of three Indian Peace medals collectively referred to as the "Washington seasons medals," the origin of which term I do not know, although James Ross Snowden used it in his 1861 study, *The Medallic Memorials of Washington*. Often, "Seasons" is capitalized.

By 1959 I had been collecting coins for seven years and intensely studying them for five or six years. I had read or skimmed through all of the issues of the *American Journal of Numismatics* from 1866 onward and all of *The Numismatist* from 1888 to the present and all of the *Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine* since the first issue of 1935.

The coins, tokens, and medals of George Washington had been interesting to me for a long time, and every once in a while I would read a few entries in the only book I had on the subject, W.S. Baker's 1885 text, *The Medallic Portraits of Washington*. More compact and "user-friendly" was a slim monograph, *The Early Medals of Washington*, bound in a red paper cover and issued by Wayte Raymond in 1941.

In the course of my rare coin business, which included co-ownership of the Empire Coin Company, formed with Jim Ruddy in April 1958, I had bought and sold quite a few Washington pieces, including a handful of the 1805 Eccleston medals described under Adventure No. 22 in this book.

I had also discussed Washington items with the relatively small number of people interested in such things, including dealer and collector friends George Fuld (who with his father Melvin conducted a column on tokens for *The Numismatist*), John J. Ford, Jr. (who was the numismatic partner at New Netherlands Coin Company, while the other partner, Charles M. Wormser, tended to business matters), and Ken Rendell (a teenager who lived in Somerville, Massachusetts, and who was a close personal friend and fellow collector). Then and now, Washington items were hardly in the mainstream of numismatics—never mind that a century earlier in 1859 they had been the most active items in the coin market, the series most desired and most featured. Things change.

I never met Robert Pennick King, however I wish I had—for my first extensive foray into Washingtoniana was through the large collection he formed.

Born in LaPorte, Pennsylvania, in 1867, King jumped into numismatics at a young age. His father, who died when Robert was just 22 months old, had been a publisher of Civil War envelopes through his firm, King & Baird. In 1876, at the age of nine, while visiting the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia, he was given a five-centime piece of Napoleon III, a coin of little value which he later credited with starting him on the trail of being a numismatist. Then, in King's own words:[1]

> This was followed by a collection of Civil War tokens, they being the easiest thing to acquire, as prior to about 1880, there were a lot of these little pieces still in circulation, and one could hardly get a twenty-five cent piece changed without getting from one to three or four of these tokens in the transaction.
>
> I know whereof I speak, as I was never sent to the store without stopping in some other store first and getting my money changed to pennies, with a chance of adding to my collection, and was seldom disappointed, forming quite a collection in this way and with the help of some friends and folks.

As an adult, King lived in Erie, Pennsylvania, with his wife Eleanor. Numismatics became a great passion, and he delved deeply into tokens and medals, largely ignoring regular coin series. In 1924 a special issue of *The Numismatist* was devoted to his incredible study, "Lincoln In Numismatics," consisting of introductory material followed by a detailed listing of 887 tokens, medals, and related pieces. This work has endured, and today this study remains definitive. Supplements were published in *The Numismatist* in April 1927 and August 1933.

King died in Erie in early 1959. Not long thereafter, Albert Gullian, of Kenmore, New York, acquired much of his collection. Al Gullian was one of a number of eastern dealers who at that time used to sell Empire Coin Company "weird" and "offbeat" numismatic items, generally these being items not listed in the *Guide Book of United States Coins*. At the time there was little in current print relating to tokens and medals, or, for that matter, United States pattern coins, and most dealers did not handle them. "Show it to John Ford" was a common expression, and as my own knowledge grew, "Show it to Dave Bowers." Whereas by 1959 Ford already knew much about such arcane specialties, I was still learning.

Anyway, in 1959 Al Gullian delivered the estate collection of Robert P. King to Jim Ruddy and me. All of a sudden, Empire Coin Company had a fantastic collection of Washington tokens and medals of the era described by Raymond in *Early Medals of Washington*, from the Voltaire medal of the 1780s down to issues of 1832-4.

Included was a set of copper Washington Seasons medals. Unfortunately for me, the medals were electrotype copies—acquired by King as such, for use as study pieces. Apparently, originals had been unavailable or too expensive.

I was fascinated with the beauty of the medals—each one depicting on the obverse an exquisitely detailed scenic panorama. I was captivated by their charm, and sought to learn more. Who made them? For what purpose. Why had I never seen any offered for sale?

Consulting W.S. Baker

At the time I was a student at the Pennsylvania State University. Combining my studies with dealing in coins, I kept certain pieces in the People's Bank near my apartment, and took selected pieces out to study and classify. Written descriptions, advertising copy, and other material were regularly mailed to Jim Ruddy, who was holding the business fort in Johnson City, New York. On many weekends I would make the four-hour drive from Penn State to Johnson City, to help tend to current activities.

For about a month at Penn State I surrounded myself with every scrap of printed information I could find about early Washington pieces. Baker's 1885 book, *Medallic Portraits of Washington*, was the key source for information about the beautiful Seasons medals and related the following.[2]

> The first three pieces described in this list, known as "The Season Medals," were issued during the second term, and although not bearing the head of Washington are usually classed in the series. They were unquestionably used as Indian peace medals, the designs referring to different phases of civilized life, being intended to attract attention to its comforts and advantages and induce them to make a change in their habits of living.
>
> These medals executed in England by C.H. Küchler, an excellent engraver of the time, are admirable examples of the art. The modeling of the cow cannot be easily surpassed and the action of the figure of the plower is particularly worthy of attention. They were struck in silver and bronze and probably not more than two full sets in perfect impression are in existence. As single pieces they are rare, the latter in bronze being more frequently met with than the others.

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[1] *The Numismatist*, February 1924.

[2] Size "30" refers to sixteenths of an inch; thus 30 sixteenths is nearly two inches:

170. THE SHEPHERD

Obverse.—A landscape. In the foreground a shepherd with a staff in his left hand, a cow and calf, two sheep and a lamb; in the distance hills, trees and a house, in which the door being open, two persons are seen; on base of design, C.H. KUCHLER. F. In exergue, U.S.A.[1]

Reverse.—SECOND PRESIDENCY OF GEO: WASHINGTON MDCCXCVI. in five parallel lines, within a wreath of olive and oak branches tied by a bow; on the bow, K. *Size 30.* Silver. Bronze.

171. THE FARMER.

Obverse.—A landscape. In the foreground a man sowing grain, and in the distance a farm-house, and a man ploughing. At left base, KUCHLER. In exergue, U.S.A.[2]

Reverse.—[Same as No. 170.] *Size 30.* Silver. Bronze.

172. THE FAMILY.

Obverse.—The interior of a room. In the background a woman weaving at a loom, and in the foreground another spinning; at the left a child watching an infant in a cradle near a chair, and on the right, an open fireplace; on base of design C.H.K. F. In exergue, U.S.A.[3]

Reverse.—[Same as No. 170.] *Size 30.* Silver. Bronze.

The name of Conrad H. Küchler, discussed in relation to the P.P.P. Myddelton token (Adventure No. 18), came to the fore as, in Baker's words, "admirable examples of the art." How unfortunate it is that Küchler's work relating to American issues was not deeper and wider in scope, for his dies are masterpieces of the highest order of engraving art.

I dreamed of owning, or at least handling in the course of my business, examples of the original Seasons medals. As time would prove, and as I realized to begin with, this would be a long time coming—for only a handful of such specimens exist.

Later, I was to handle these on several occasions, including during the sale of the specialized cabinets of Indian peace medals in the Garrett Collection for the Johns Hopkins University (1979-1981), the Virgil M. Brand Collection (1984-1985), and the Chris Schenkel Collection (1990), among other instances.

In more modern times I was able to acquire a set for myself, one each in copper, each showing extensive signs of use and wear—probably by Native Americans who received and prized them.

Indian Peace Medals

In the early days of American settlement the Indians (today more properly Native Americans) resisted takeovers and depredations by white men into lands they had owned and occupied since time immemorial. With little power to effectively resist, the Indians were pushed into different areas, or resettled in specific spots, or otherwise taken from areas that European settlers wanted to use for farming, manufacturing, and the establishment of communities.

The English (in particular) who settled New England and the Atlantic coastal districts viewed the Indians as obstacles in land acquisition and, later, in westward expansion. The French, whose colonization efforts in the New World were not as ambitious as those of the English, were vastly outnumbered by the Indians in many of the districts in which they settled, and, accordingly (if a cause and effect relationship is appropriate here) they co-existed more peacefully. The Spanish *conquistadores*, after overrunning and brutalizing the natives who occupied vast areas of Mexico, Central America, and South America, later endeavored, through the Catholic church, to "Christianize" the people and have them live quiet, industrious lives.

> At first, the Indians were admired and, sometimes, found to be interesting and curious—the "noble savage," master of the wilderness.[4] Under such philosophy, certain Native Americans, including the famous Pocahontas, visited the royal courts of Europe. In a microcosm, such people from the New World represented civilization as it might have been in Europe, but for the development of technology and science. Such idyllic thoughts soon faded in most sectors, and Indians were thought of as savage and un-Christian.

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[1] Modern notes (from observation): The features of the shepherd resemble George Washington and his representation may have been intended. If so, this is, indeed, a "medallic portrait of Washington" (as is The Farmer). Overhanging is a tree, finally delineated in the die, with clumps of leaves; the species is not immediately recognizable. Below is a small (or else distant) leaning fir. In the background across the farmland are hills or small mountains, most prominent on the right. Through the doorway of the house can be seen a mother seated and a small child standing, in front of a fireplace and mantle, with a kettle hanging from a chain within the fireplace. As is true of much of Küchler's work, one could study the die details for a long time and find endless continuing interest.

[2] Modern notes (from observation): "The Farmer" reveals a walking figure, also in a short coat and also with features somewhat resembling those of George Washington, holding a basket of seeds in his left hand and sowing with his right, while walking to the left in a plowed field. In the background is a home near which is a farmer guiding an ox-drawn plow (the plow being of the general style, then in wide use, as also seen on 1785-6 Vermont and 1788 New Jersey coppers). In the far distance are mountains, more prominent than on The Shepherd.

[3] Modern notes (from observation): The seated woman in the foreground has a fireplace to her back, the same being of the general configuration seen through the doorway on The Shepherd medal.

[4] Father Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians*, Vol. I, pp. 7 ff. gives much history and philosophy.

It was thought that if they could be "Christianized" and otherwise acquainted with the trappings of European-style civilization, all would be peaceful.

In the meantime, there was the problem that the Indians owned the land by right of historic possession, and the newcomers from Europe wanted it.

In some districts of North America, such as Pennsylvania, agreements were often peaceable, at least for a time. However, battles fought between and among French, British, and American troops over a period of years often saw Indians used as pawns. The British enlisted their aid and paid bounties for scalps of American citizens, etc. In the meantime, traders eagerly sold and traded the implements of the white man to the Indians, including whiskey and firearms, which in time caused many problems. Indians also proved to be very susceptible to diseases contracted from white people, in particular cholera, which killed countless thousands.

In the South, peace was maintained with Indians so long as there was enough territory for white settlers to develop farms and towns. As land became scarce, Indians were persecuted and driven out—as in the vast Cherokee Nation in much of what is today the Carolinas—the native Americans were removed by military force and exiled to distant Western lands considered to be worthless. The same scenario was repeated with the Seminole Indians in Florida. A careful reading of the biographies of certain highly admired American historical figures—presidents Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren prominent among them—will reveal treatment of Indians bordering on absolute inhumanity.

Eventually, most Indians were shepherded into increasingly desolate and ever-smaller lands designated as reservations, in which the white men set up rules and regulations for travel, trading, and other matters. Many such places were, in effect, concentration camps. Sometimes, Indians would be shot and hunted for "sport," and there are sorry stories of this happening in many different places, including in the Carolinas in the 1830s and the Pacific Northwest in the 1850s.

Along with slavery, treatment of the Indians stands as a blot on American history, and no apologies can undo the harm. While the subject of the generally unfortunate treatment given to Indians by white settlers is beyond the purview of the present commentary and may be more social than numismatic, it is important for every present-day citizen to be aware of the past, so nothing like this can ever happen again.

However, there are certain medals related to the interchange which are of commanding importance today. These are generally referred to as Indian peace medals, as they were given to Indians by government agents or, in some instances, by merchants or trading companies, in an effort to convince the Indians that they were indeed special in the eyes of the presenter or in the view of some foreign government, and that the medals represented a token of esteem and a bond of friendship. It can be said that such medals generally represented bright spots in relationships between white men and the native races, and as such they are artifacts of the good side of the equation.

Indian Peace Medals and Numismatics

Although such medals had been offered in many American auctions from the 1860s onward, little effort had been made to classify and study them from a numismatic viewpoint.

In 1878, Jacques Florimond Loubat's large and impressively formatted study, *The Medallic History of the United States of America, 1776-1876 with 170 Etchings by Jules Jacquemart,* gave selected information relating to Indian peace medals in a setting with other historical issues, including military and presidential pieces. In 1894, C. Wyllys Betts' book, *American Colonial History Illustrated by Contemporary Medals,* was published posthumously under the editorship of Lyman H. Low and William T.R. Marvin. This incredibly important work included peace medals along with examples of many other types and purposes.

Among the earliest studies specifically relating to Indian peace medals was that mounted by Rev. Horace Edwin Hayden, who in the 1880s lived in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. In July 1885 he contributed an excellent article, "Fields for Numismatic Research," to the *American Journal of Numismatics.* At the time he had one Indian peace medal in his collection, but had observed others. In the same year his 26-page monograph, *An Account of Various Silver and Copper Medals Presented to the North American Indians by the Sovereigns of England, France and Spain from 1600 to 1800,* was published, reprinted from Vol. II, Part 2, of the Proceedings of the Wyoming Historical and Geological Society, a group located in Wilkes-Barre.

In the twentieth century, the study of Indian peace medals hit its stride. Bauman L. Belden's *Indian Peace Medals Issued in the United States,* published by the American Numismatic Society in 1927, drew largely upon medals in the Society's collection. This remained the standard text until augmented by Father Francis Paul Prucha's 1971 book, *Indian Peace Medals* *in American History*, published under authority of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Prucha's two-volume opus, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians* (University of Nebraska Press, 1984), is definitive regarding the history and background of the title subject and supplements his 1971 work on medals. As these words are being written, the latest book-length study is John W. Adams' 1999 study, *The Indian Peace Medals of George III or His Majesty's Sometime Allies*.

In addition to the preceding, many mentions and even detailed studies of Indian peace medals were included as part of auction catalogues, in the aforementioned W.S. Baker 1885 *Medallic Portraits of Washington*, R.W. Julian's unsurpassed, *Medals of the United States Mint, the First Century 1792-1892*, and elsewhere.

Engraved Washington Indian Peace Medals

"George Washington's administration was a crucial period in American relations with the Indians, who for the most part had taken the side of the British during the Revolutionary War," Francis Paul Prucha wrote in *Indian Peace Medals in American History*. "The new nation needed to conciliate them if it was to start its existence in peace. Washington and his Secretary of War, Henry Knox, used every means possible to attain this goal, and they soon realized that silver piece medals were a necessary instrument in their policy."

Although Prucha and others give details, in general the leader of a tribe would be designated as a *great medal chief* and would be a candidate to receive a large silver medal, Lesser medals, obvious by their smaller diameters, would be given to lesser officials. Usually, these were presented along with gifts of clothing and implements.

Prucha relates that in February 1792, Leonard Shaw, a recent Princeton graduate, was sent by the War Department to the South to visit the Cherokees, taking clothing, ornaments, and medals, along with letters and documents bearing greetings from the "Great Father," George Washington, an example being provided by this letter intended for the Choctaws:[1]

> Your father, General Washington, sends you two great silver medals, and two sets of arm bands, and also two suits of rich uniform clothes, as a mark of his affection. You are to point out the two great chiefs who are to receive these marks of distinction.

Another view of the practice is provided by a listing of silver items ordered in 1794 by Secretary Knox for presentation to the Chickasaw Indians:[2]

> Eight of the largest medals with eight sets of the broadest arm bands and eight sets of the broadest wrist bands.
>
> Fourteen medals of the 2d size, with fourteen sets of arm bands and fourteen sets of wrist bands of the same size.
>
> One medal 3rd size, with one set of arm and one set of wrist bands of the same size.
>
> Twelve dozen broaches.
>
> Twelve dozen nose jewels.
>
> Twelve dozen ear bobs.

It is evident that the number of medals distributed during President George Washington's terms in office, 1789-1793 and 1793-1797, ran into the hundreds. For the one-year period from April 1, 1795 to April 1, 1796, the following medals were among the many items forwarded by the government to Fort Washington, near present-day Cincinnati.:[3]

> 23 silver medals, 1st size.
> 20 ditto, 2nd size.
> 40 ditto, 3rd size.

Indian peace medals of these types were prepared by several different engravers, most notably Joseph Richardson, Jr., of Philadelphia, who later served in the post of assayer at the Philadelphia Mint. During Washington's administration, Philadelphia was the seat of the federal government.

The typical medal was engraved on an elliptical piece of silver, fitted with a frame or border and, at the top, a loop or hanger. The obverse motif of most pieces showed President Washington in agrarian setting, extending a hand of friendship to an Indian chief who was smoking a calumet (peace pipe). The reverse illustrated the Great Seal of the United States.

Particularly well recorded in American history was a certain medal presented to Chief Red Jacket in 1792, about whom much has been written.

Although the Philadelphia Mint had been set up in 1792 and had commenced the coinage of copper cents and half cents in 1793, during Washington's administration there were no presses of sufficient size on hand to strike large-diameter medals. In fact, on October 15, 1794, when silver dollars were struck for the first time, the effort was not successful, and after 1,758 had been made for circulation, plus some that were rejected at the time, it was found that they would not strike up properly. The typical piece was weak in certain details. Accordingly, production of the denomination was suspended until well into 1795 when a larger-capacity press was installed, but this hand-powered screw press was still not strong enough to make Indian peace medals.

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[1] Prucha, *Indian Peace Medals in American History*, p. 7.

[2] *Ibid*, p. 8.

[3] *Ibid*, p. 11.

Genesis of the Seasons Medals

Near the end of his second term, President Washington addressed a delegation of Cherokee Indians who had come to Philadelphia:[1]

> When I have retired to my farm [Mount Vernon] I shall hear of you; and it will give me great pleasure to know that you have taken my advice, and are walking in the both which I have described.
>
> But before I retire I shall speak to my beloved man, the Secretary of War, to get prepared some medals, to be given to such Cherokees as by following my advice shall best deserve them. For this purpose Mr. [Silas] Dinsmoor is from time to time to visit every town in your nation. He will give instructions to those who desire to learn what I have recommended.
>
> He will see what improvements are made; who are most industrious in raising cattle; in growing corn, wheat, cotton and flax; and in spinning; and on those who excel these rewards are to be bestowed.

The industrious activities mentioned by Washington—raising cattle, farming, and spinning—are the same as used for motifs on the Seasons medals.

Creating the Seasons Medals

One of the most extensive early numismatic discussions of the Seasons medals is found in *The Proceedings of the American Numismatic and Archaeological Society, December 16, 1894,* which reflects the knowledge available at the time.[2] The contribution, under the title of "Some New Light on the Washington Season Medals," was contributed by Daniel Parish, Jr., who had been president of the Society since 1887.[3]

Parish quoted the following letter of John A. King, written in 1895:

> When looking recently with my brother, Dr. Charles D. King, into the drawers of Rufus King's library desk at Jamaica, we found three silver medals of fine device, admirably executed and evidently issued during Washington's administration.[4] Upon closer examination Dr. King remarked, "I have the duplicates in copper and believe there is a partial account of their origin among Rufus King's letters."
>
> Thinking they might be of value to the collection of the New-York Historical Society, I brought the medals to the city and was surprised to learn that specimens in silver were entirely unknown to collectors, and were not catalogued in any of the books.
>
> Dr. King soon sent to me copies of the letters among Rufus King's papers, but the original letter sent by the then Secretary of War, Col. McHenry,[5] to Mr. King, in which the order was given for the medals had been lost or mislaid. I thought to supply this by application to the War Department at Washington, but was there informed that all of the records and correspondence of the Department had been burned in the early part of the century.
>
> As to the medals themselves, the Bureau was ignorant that any such had ever been issued. The Treasury Department was equally without knowledge upon this subject. Finally Dr. King found at the Mint in Philadelphia a set in copper, but nothing was known of their history, of their cost, or of what had become of the large number which had been shipped from England in 1798 upon the order of the Government, as there seemed to be nothing in the records of any of the departments at Washington in relation of these beautiful series of medals.
>
> At the suggestion of our learned librarian of the New-York Historical Society, Mr. William Kelby, it occurred to me that I might occupy a few minutes at the annual meeting of our Society, after the business was finished, in throwing some light upon the origin and use of these medals, which, in accordance with the power conferred by Congress upon President Washington, had been ordered to be executed in England. The power is as follows:
>
> On the 19th of May 1796, President Washington signed an Act regulating the intercourse with the Indians and establishing a boundary line in the North-West Territory. In the nineteenth section of this Act we read as follows:
>
> "That in order to promote civilization among the friendly Indian tribes, and to secure the continuance

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[1] *Ibid*, p. 8, from the collected correspondence and papers of Washington.

[2] Copy of the *Proceedings* furnished by David E. Tripp; this was a prime source for Bauman L. Belden, 1927, and is duly credited as such.

[3] Parish, who lived in New York City, joined the Society on April 13, 1865, and in that year was elected corresponding secretary of the group. He had an abiding interest in history and numismatics, and in 1875 was listed as one of 140 subscribers to S.S. Crosby's *Early Coins of America*. Parish was an active member of the New-York Historical Society and donated many things to their exhibits.

[4] Rufus King (1755-1827), born in Scarborough, Maine, graduated from Harvard in 1777. From 1784 to 1786 he served as a congressman from Massachusetts, moving to New York in the latter year. He served in the New York State Legislature, and in 1789 was elected to the U.S. Senate, achieving reelection in 1795. Relevant to the present text, in 1796 he succeeded Thomas Pinckney as United States minister to England, in which post he remained until 1803. In 1804 he was the unsuccessful Federalist candidate for vice president.

[5] James McHenry (1753-1816), born in Ireland, came to America in 1771. Important to the present text, he served as secretary of war 1796-1800, and was succeeded in the post in the latter year by Samuel Dexter.

of this friendship, it shall be lawful for the President of the United States to cause them to be furnished with useful domestic animals and implements of husbandry, and with goods, or money, as he shall judge proper," etc.

Washington, in his address to Congress Dec. 7th 1796, says:

"Measures calculated to insure a continuance of friendship with the Indians, to preserve peace along the extent of our interior frontier, have been digested and adopted to draw them nearer to the civilized state," etc.

Here, without doubt, is the authority under which the medals were ordered through Col. McHenry, the Secretary of War, and were executed in Birmingham of Boulton, to whom Rufus King, then representing the United States at the Court of Great Britain, was requested to give the commission. The subjoined was then entered upon, and in its details lends an enhanced value to the medals as being possessed of unusual interest.

Col. Trumbull was one of the agents of our government in London in connection with the settlement of disputed claims arising under the Jay Treaty. He was also, in his leisure hours, studying art with Benjamin West. The order to prepare the devices for three medals was confided to Trumbull. These he afterwards furnished, first submitting the drawings for criticism to West. The description of them in his letter to Mr. Kind is curious and adds peculiar interest to the work. Subsequently Mr. Boulton received the devices and executed the order in the most artistic style, employing to aid him Mr. Küchler, one of the most noted Belgian artists.

The whole number ordered was 700, of these 500 were to be in silver and 200 in copper. In his letter to Mr. Boulton, Mr. King suggests that as the Indians use everything of this sort as ornaments, it would be advisable to put a small hold in the upper part of each medal; but as it will a little deface the medal Mr. King requests that fifty-one of those in silver and twenty-one in copper be left without the hole.

On July 7th, Mr. King writes to Col. McHenry of the shipment of two boxes containing 326 silver medals, and of the probable shipment by same vessel of many of those in copper.

Copies of these letters remain with the medals now in the possession of the New-York Historical Society, and are of value, as nothing is known elsewhere of the origin, or, apparently, of the history of the medals, except of those in copper in the United States Mint at Philadelphia and those of silver and copper found among the effects of Rufus King. I have not been able to trace any specimens, save, perhaps, through a footnote of volume 3, page 1,003 of the new edition of Lewis and Clark's expedition to the North-West during the administration of President Jefferson, to which my attention has been called by our Librarian, Mr. William Kelby, which note reads as follows:

"To each of the chiefs we gave a small medal, explaining the use and importance of medals among both the white and red men."

Doubtless many of the medals, both silver and copper, had been distributed prior to 1800 and before the Lewis & Clark Expedition, and may yet be brought to light through the more frequent journeys of travelers among the Indian tribes of the far North-West. In the meantime they seem to be rare and certainly possess great intrinsic merit and beauty, and it is well to preserve safely the three medals we now have in the archives of the New-York Historical Society.

January 1894,
John A. King.[1]

Communications with England

On October 10, 1796, Secretary of War James McHenry wrote to Rufus King, American minister to England, authorizing him to arrange for the preparation and production of copper and silver medals suitable for presentation to the Indians.

On January 4, 1797, King, in London, replied to McHenry:

> Dear Sir,—I have received your letter of the 10th of October. Mr. Trumbull will undertake the devices for the medals, and according to your direction, I will apply to Mr. Boulton to strike them. At present I am unable to inform you what time will be requisite for the execution of this commission.

John Trumbull (1756-1843), a native of Connecticut, served as an aide to General Washington in the Revolution, gaining the rank of colonel. Circa 1784 he sailed to England and commenced study of art under Benjamin West,[2] remaining there for about five years. While there he commenced a series of dramatic paintings and engravings depicting scenes in American history, one of which, the *Signing of the Declaration of Independence*, became particularly well known (and was also used on medals and currency). Later, in 1794, he went to London again and served as secretary to John Jay. He spent his later life in England and in America, engaging in various artistic projects. Much of his work was donated to Yale in the 1830s in exchange for an annuity.

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[1] This is a different person from John King, the American numismatist who made at least two trips to Holland circa the 1860s and "found no less than 15 specimens [of the 1778-9 Rhode Island medal] in various metals, three of which Mr. McCoy purchased, and the rest came into my hands," this being related by W.E. Woodward (cf. *American Journal of Numismatics*, October 1867). King's collection had been scheduled to be sold on January 5, 1864, by Leonard & Co., Boston auctioneers, but was withdrawn prior to the event (cf. Emmanuel J. Attinelli, *Numisgraphics*, p. 34).

[2] West (1738-1820) was born in America but spent most of his professional life in England, where in 1768 he was a founder of the Royal Academy, becoming president in 1792, the position he held when the Seasons medals were produced.

On August 8, 1797, Trumbull wrote to Rufus King about the Indian peace medal commission:

> I have the pleasure after so long delay to enclose your slight sketches of three subjects for medals, in conformity to the request of the President as expressed to you by the Secretary of War.
>
> No. 1 — Alludes to the raising of cattle — a cow licking a young calf — sheep and a lamb sucking — a man in the character of a shepherd watching them — a small house and trees in the distance.
>
> No. 2 — A man sowing wheat — in the distance another person ploughing — a small house and enclosures — characterize the first steps in agriculture.
>
> No. 3 — The inside of a house — a woman spinning — another weaving — an infant in the cradle rocked by another child somewhat larger — is meant to convey an idea of domestic tranquility and employment.
>
> I have on all put the initials of the United States of America on the face of the medals; on the reverse these words: "Second Presidency of George Washington, MDCCXCVI."
>
> The designs have been seen by Mr. West and have his approbation. They are very slight but I believe sufficient for the excellent workmen whom Mr. Boulton employs.

The partnership of Boulton & Watt, operators of the Soho Manufactory ("Soho Mint") in Birmingham, was the logical choice to make the medals. They had on hand powerful steam-operated presses that were far more sophisticated than anything in place at the Philadelphia Mint.

The original order called for 700 medals to be struck, consisting of 500 in silver and 200 in copper, each to be pierced for suspension, except for 21 copper pieces and 51 silver examples. Presumably, this allowed for seven sets in copper and 17 sets in silver to be retained for exhibit or other purposes.

When produced, the pieces for presentation to Indians were each provided with a small loop or hanger attached to the top edge.

Already, President Washington was in retirement at his beloved Mount Vernon, and John Adams was president. Reflective of the change in administration and the slowness of the order, McHenry, chafing at the delay, composed a letter to Rufus King on December 7, 1797, noting in part:[1]

> My poor Indians are very clamorous for their medals; more so than for their plows.... It occurs also, should the work be still in a state to admit of alteration that one side of the medal might exhibit figures of a warlike nature, and the United States as protectrix of the Indians. I should wish in this case the legend to be Presidency John Adams 1797. The medal would then comprehend both presidencies.

As the King correspondence file cited by Daniel Parish reveals, many if not most details concerning the shipping, receipt, and distribution of the medals were lost long ago. However it is known that in July 1798 two boxes with 326 silver medals and an unknown number of copper strikings were shipped to America.

More on the matter is related in this letter from Rufus King to Secretary of War McHenry transmitting several of the medals:[2]

> Great Cumberland Place [London]
> April 21, 1799
> Sir,
>
> I am very sorry that I have not a piece of each denomination of our coins to offer to you, but I take the liberty to find, and beg you to accept a specimen of our coinage, a half eagle, a dollar and a quarter dollar. I add to them three medals, as examples of a large number that by order of our Government, and under my direction, were last year struck by Boulton for the purpose of being distributed among the Indians within our territory. A small ring is soldered to the edge of the medal by which according to the Indian custom, it may be suspended as an ornament of dress. The designs were chosen with a reference to our endeavors to change the manners of the Indians, and as far as practicable to utilize them, for this purpose the Government of the U.S. as stated previous, delivers to them, goods[?] of various kinds, cattle, sheep, and the different implements of agriculture.
>
> With the most perfect respect and esteem I have the honor to be your obedient and faithful servant,
> Rufus King

Update by James McHenry

The following letter from Secretary of War James McHenry to his successor in office, Samuel Dexter, under date of May 29, 1800, provides a status report:[3]

> It is especially and specifically recommended to my successor, to make himself as soon as possible minutely acquainted with the actual state of the Indian

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[1] Bauman L. Belden, *Indian Peace Medals of the United States*, pp. 89-90. • Draft of letter in the collection of the American Philosophical Society.

[2] Letter courtesy of John W. Adams.

[3] Letter courtesy of John W. Adams. • Dexter (1761-1816) served as a Federalist congressman from Massachusetts, 1795-1795; U.S. senator 1799-1800; secretary of war 1800 (relevant to the present citation); and secretary of the Treasury January 1801 to January 1802.

> Superintendencies, and also with the system which has been adopted, and is now in execution for the amelioration of the condition of the Indians, and keeping them at peace with and attached to the United States. I cannot but flatter myself that the efficiency of the system initiated by the late President will not be impaired under the direction of my successor, having had its success much at heart and leaving under its influence which must increase with time the great body of Indians in all parts of the United States, well affected to the interests of our Country—friendly to each other—indisposed to war and progressing in civilization.
>
> To aid this system, a series of medals in silver and bronze have been procured from England with devices elegantly executed emblematic of the progressive states of man from the savage to the earliest arts of civilized life. These were intended to be distributed by the Superintendents as encouragements to those of the Indians who should make the greatest advances in raising cattle, the cultivation of their lands and the domestic manufacturers of spinning and weaving. They are deposited in four boxes in the Bank of the United States, except a few which are in a desk in the Secretary's room at the War Office – the key of which will be left enclosed for my successor. I have taken to myself two of each of the three sets forming the series administration of General Washington toward the Indians.

Distributing the Seasons Medals

By July 1798 Adams was well into the second year of his administration. The supply of Seasons medals was sufficiently ample that many remained on hand by March 1801, when Thomas Jefferson took office. Thus, during John Adams' 1797-1801 term in office, the Seasons medals, imprinted GEO: WASHINGTON on the reverse, served as his gifts to Indians.[1]

Under Jefferson's guidance the Louisiana Purchase was effected in 1803, and the territory of the United States was expanded to nearly double its previous size. The Lewis and Clark Expedition, under the direction of Captain Meriwether Lewis and Lieutenant William Clark, was formed to explore the new acquisition. The party comprised about 40 men, ages 29 to 33 years, who were accustomed to living outdoors and who, among them, included members with knowledge in zoology, botany, meteorology, navigation, mechanics, and sign language and other communications with the Indians.

The entourage left St. Louis in three boats on May 14, 1804, and headed up the Missouri River to parts generally unknown, except for scattered accounts received from traders. Traveling far to the north into what would become North Dakota, the group built lodging and spent the winter with the friendly Mandan Indians of the Sioux tribe. Early in 1805, they enlisted the services of a French interpreter, Toussaint Charbonneau, who was accompanied by his Indian wife acquired by purchase, Sacagawea ("Bird Woman"), and their infant son, the latter two forming the subject of a United States dollar coin nearly two centuries later in 2000.

Sacagawea was very helpful and facilitated friendship and communications with Indians, including with the Shoshones in the district now known as Montana. Crossing the Continental Divide on horses obtained from the Indians, the men of the expedition then went by canoe down the Clearwater, Snake, and Columbia rivers, reaching the Pacific Ocean on November 15, 1805.

A group of buildings designated as Fort Clatsop was erected, and the winter was spent there. In March 1806 the expedition headed eastward, crossing the Yellowstone district, to the Missouri River, to arrive in St. Louis on September 23.

The expedition was a great success. Despite many hardships, the lack of food on occasion, and privations, only one life was lost. The extensive journals, widely studied and published later, and of interest even today, told of many meetings and transactions with Indians. However, specific details concerning Indian peace medals are scarce, and those pertaining to Seasons medals are more elusive yet. It is not known how many Seasons and how many Jefferson portrait medals were carried by the explorers or how many were distributed. Prucha suggested that perhaps only silver issues were taken on the expedition, but there is no way of knowing.

On October 29, 1804, at a Mandan village, a medal with a portrait of Jefferson was given to the first chief, a "medal of weaving and domestic animals" (which seems to be *two* medals, as the topics are different) to a second chief, and to the third, "a medal with the impression of a man sowing wheat."

On August 17, 1805, at a position near the Great Divide, in what later became Lewis and Clark County, Montana, this entry was made in the journal regarding a presentation to the chief of the Shoshone Indians:[2]

> We then distributed our presents. To Cameahwait we gave a medal of the small size, with the likeness of President Jefferson, and on the reverse a figure of

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[1] *However,* seemingly at a later time, some "Adams peace medals" were made up, probably for numismatic and cabinet purposes, utilizing a reverse regularly employed 1809-1849. The obverse die, unsigned is believe to have been made by Moritz Fürst. Apparently the first striking of such pieces, from dies made decades earlier, was in December 1878 when 50 bronze impressions were struck. Extensive details can be found in R.W. Julian, *Medals of the United States Mint: The First Century 1792-1892*, p. 31, there catalogued as No. IP-1.

[2] Bauman L. Belden, *Indian Peace Medals of the United States*, p. 24.

> hands clasped with a pipe and tomahawk; to this was added a uniform coat, a shirt, a pair of scarlet leggins, a carrot of tobacco, and some small articles.
>
> Each of the other chiefs received a small medal struck during the presidency of General Washington, a shirt, handkerchief, leggins, a knife, and some tobacco. Medals of the same sort were also presented to the young warriors, who, though not chiefs, were promising youths, and very much respected in the tribe.

In *History of the Expedition Under the Command of Lewis and Clark,* Elliott Coues noted that on May 10, 1806, an Indian was presented with one of the medals showing a sower, "struck during the presidency of Washington."

From the foregoing it seems that the expedition had an ample supply of medals on hand and distributed them during the entire course of travel. After 1806, no account has been found of their use, and perhaps the supply was exhausted. By that time portrait medals of Jefferson, struck at the Philadelphia Mint, were readily available, and, in 1809 and later, the James Madison administration had its own portrait medals.

No specific Indian peace medals referring to President John Adams were struck during his 1797-1801 administration, as the supply of Seasons medals was more than adequate. "There appears to have been a considerable distribution of these medals during the presidency of John Adams," Belden wrote.[1] The quantities of Seasons medals eventually struck and delivered, and the circumstances of their presentation to Indians, are largely undocumented. What we know or surmise is largely from the existing medals themselves. Today the typical Seasons medal specimen encountered shows signs of wear and, often, dents and marks, possibly from having been plowed up in the prairie—examples that were lost by Indians or buried. Virtually all have signs of hangers or suspension loops. No doubt each would could tell a great story if it could only speak.

Thus is set the scenario of The Shepherd, The Farmer, and The Home, to my mind three of the most fascinating, wonderful items in the American numismatic series.

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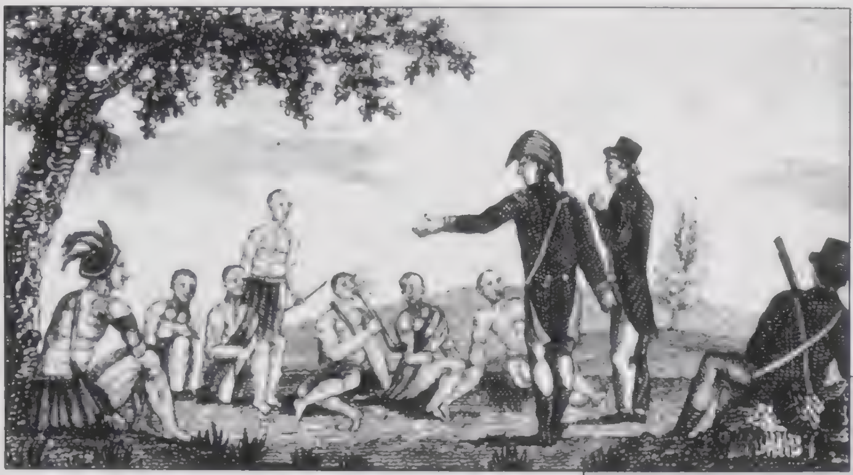
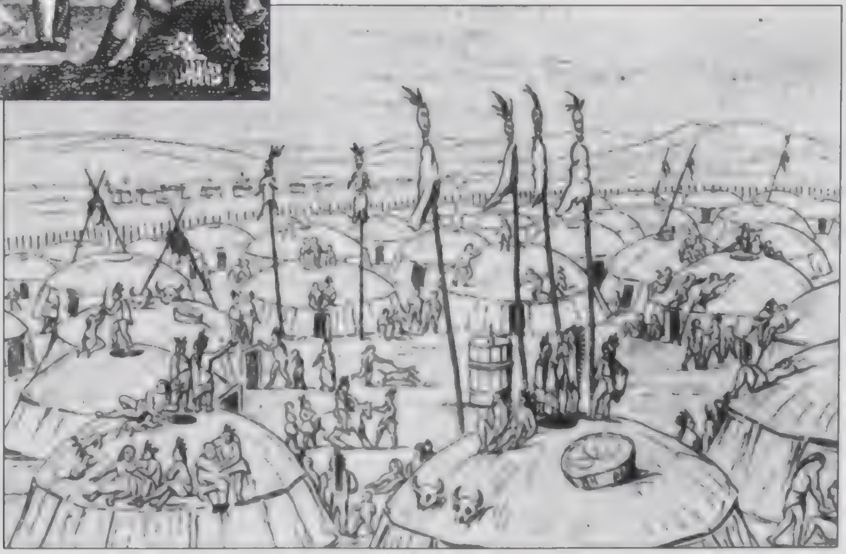
[1] *Indian Peace Medals of the United States,* p. 24.



"Captain Lewis & Clark holding a Council with the Indians," from Patrick Gass, *Journal of Voyages and Travels under Lewis and Clark, 1812.*

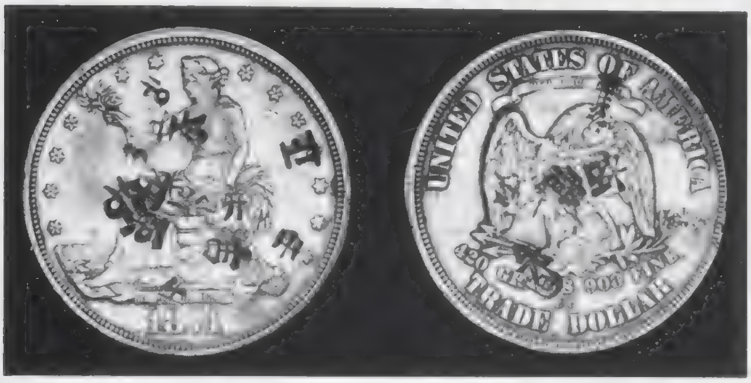


The Mandan villages, where Lewis & Clark and the members of their expedition spent the winter of 1804-1805. From George Catlin, *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Condition of the North American Indians, 1841.*

ADVENTURE NO. 49

"BEEN THERE, DONE THAT"

The Travels of a Trade Dollar



An 1874-CC trade dollar bearing many "chops" indicating that it has seen extensive services in China commercial channels.

Silver to China

"Been there, done that," the illustrated trade dollar might say if it could come to life. In the nineteenth century in Canton and other trading ports of China, silver coins were preferred. Gold coins were exchanged there on occasion, but were not particularly in favor. Silver was the metal of choice. Most popular of all among silver coins were the Spanish-American silver eight reales or eight *bits*, a dollar size coin that saw worldwide use in the nineteenth century, and became a familiar sight in ports of South America, Africa, China, and elsewhere.

During the early part of the century, trading ships out of Salem, Massachusetts, bound for the East Indies, typically carried thousands of Spanish American "dollars" in their holds, to exchange for spices, cloth, and other goods.

An 1859 "Trade Dollar"

In San Francisco in 1859, the merchants who traded extensively with China were forced to pay a premium for Spanish-American silver "dollars" as American silver dollars were not available. A petition was made to the Treasury Department to coin thousands of Liberty Seated dollars for the China trade and this was done, creating the first mintmarked issue from the West Coast, the 1859-S silver dollar.

Just 20,000 were struck, and most were sent to China. However, at the time the commercial and financial needs of the state of California were not particularly important to the Treasury Department or the government, both of which were headquartered thousands of miles away in the East, requiring about a month for travel from one place to another. Although the 1859-S silver "trade" dollar was very successful, no others were coined.

The "Official" Trade Dollar

In 1872 a new American coin denomination was created, the trade dollar, specifically made for the China market. This coin at 420 grains was heavier than the standard 412.5 grain Liberty Seated dollar, and was intended to compete head-on with the Spanish American dollar. The venture was a grand success, and in the ports of China the American trade dollar was enthusiastically received.

From 1873 through 1878, millions of trade dollars were shipped to the Orient. As they passed from hand to hand, they were stamped with markings of banks, merchants and others, called "chops," or, more familiarly, *chop marks*. Some trade dollars show a dozen or more chop marks, indicating intensive use.

Today, 1873-1878 trade dollars with chop marks are readily available and serve as tangible reminders of an American coin specifically made for export, coins that have "been there, done that"—which served their intended purposes.

Early in 1878 a political boondoggle known as the Bland-Allison act mandated that Uncle Sam buy huge amounts of silver bullion, a political ploy to help support the sagging silver market. Trade dollars, which were made at the different mints in response to bullion deposits by private interests, were discontinued, never mind that they had been very successful and there was still a demand for them! Now, silver producers had a far wider market. Millions of ounces were purchased each year by the government and coined into "Morgan" dollars many of which remained in storage for decades.

CHINA
CHINESE TARTARY
CORÉA
JAPAN
HAINAN
FORMOSA
QUELPAERTS I.

Map of China, published by George Philip & Son, Liverpool, 1852.

ADVENTURE NO. 50

THE 2000 NEW HAMPSHIRE QUARTER

Washington with State Reverse — "Live Free or Die"

The 2000 Washington quarter with the New Hampshire statehood reverse. Depicted is the Old Man of the Mountain—a natural rock formation in Franconia Notch in the White Mountains. LIVE FREE OR DIE is the state motto.

Excitement

In the "Granite State," New Hampshire, excitement for our own quarter dollar had been building for a long time.[1] We hard-rock New Englanders, native or, in my case, transplanted (from California), are fiercely proud of the place. The state motto, seen on license plates and many other places—LIVE FREE OR DIE—comes directly from a patriotic flag of the 1770s, just when the fires of revolution had been lit.

Today it seems silly to some, but we like it. Sort of old-fashioned. Perhaps evocative of the patriotism of our forefathers, in an era in which everything had to be politically correct.

Governor Jeanne Shaheen, charged with gathering ideas for a design for what was to be the ninth in the series of state-reverse quarters, tapped state resources, including numismatists David Sundman, affable dealer and president of Littleton Coin Co. and a personal friend of mine, and Robert F. Fritsch, a collector. Seems good so far.

Beyond that, various citizens with background and expertise in history, art, and culture were enlisted—creating a panel of nine consultants.

Proposed Designs

Ideas for designs were aplenty—not counting sketches made by schoolchildren and others interested. Four ideas were selected from over 400 submitted:[2]

> A theme reflecting New Hampshire poet Robert Frost's work, such as "The Road Not Taken."
>
> Two variations of the Old Man of the Mountain.
>
> A wooden spire-topped "meeting house" of the type said to have been a forum for town meetings generations ago, and in many New Hampshire communities, still used today.
>
> Two versions of a wooden covered bridge crossing a stream.

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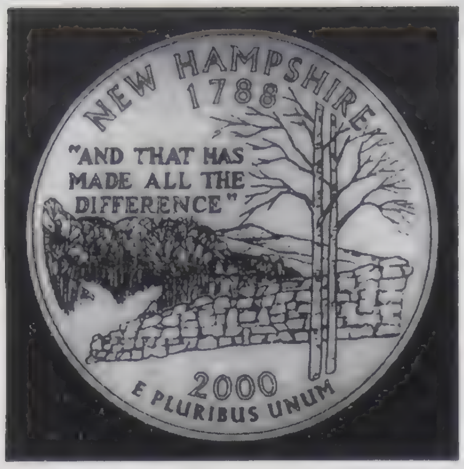
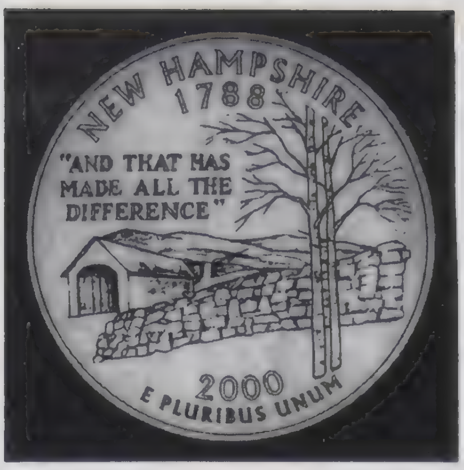
[1] Through correspondence and other comments, David Sundman and Kenneth E. Bressett supplied information for this "adventure." An earlier version appeared in the *Rare Coin Review*, 2000.

[2] • Certain information from David Sundman's files on the subject. Also, "New Hampshire Quarter Committee Experiences," Bob Fritsch, *NENA News*, Spring 2001, gave another view of the project.


NEW HAMPSHIRE
1788
"AND THAT HAS MADE ALL THE DIFFERENCE"
2000
E PLURIBUS UNUM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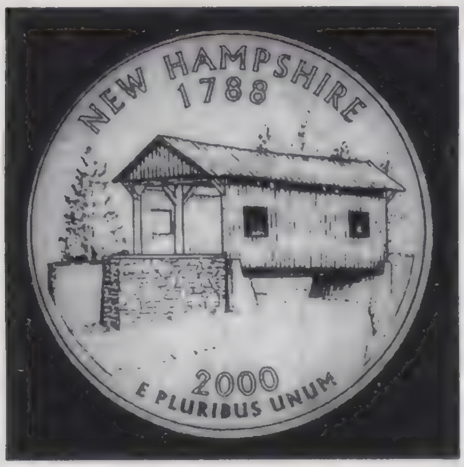
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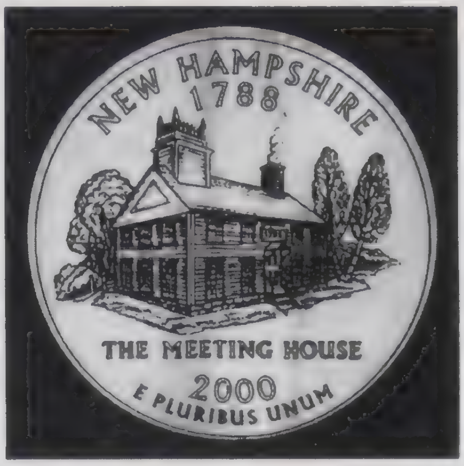
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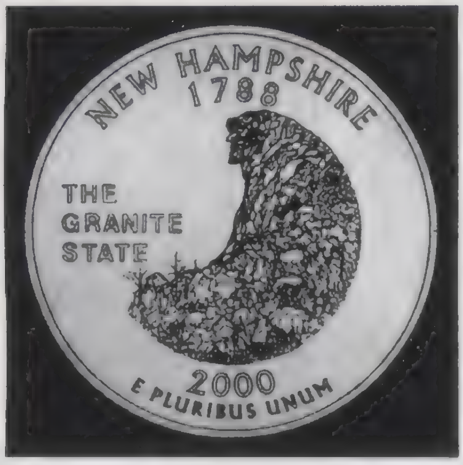
1788
THE MEETING HOUSE
2000
E PLURIBUS UNUM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THE GRANITE STATE
2000
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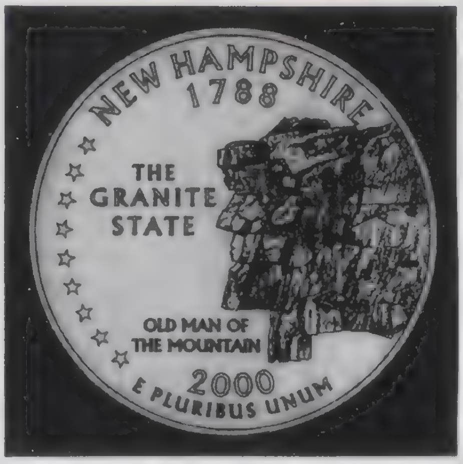
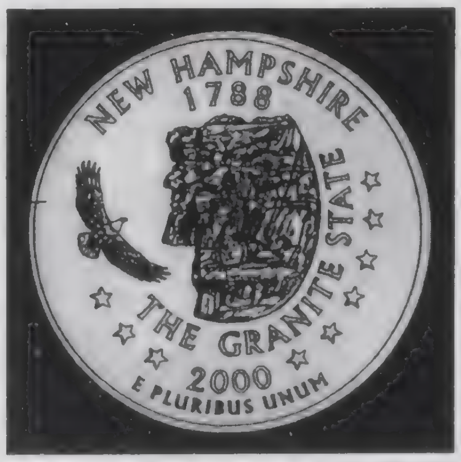
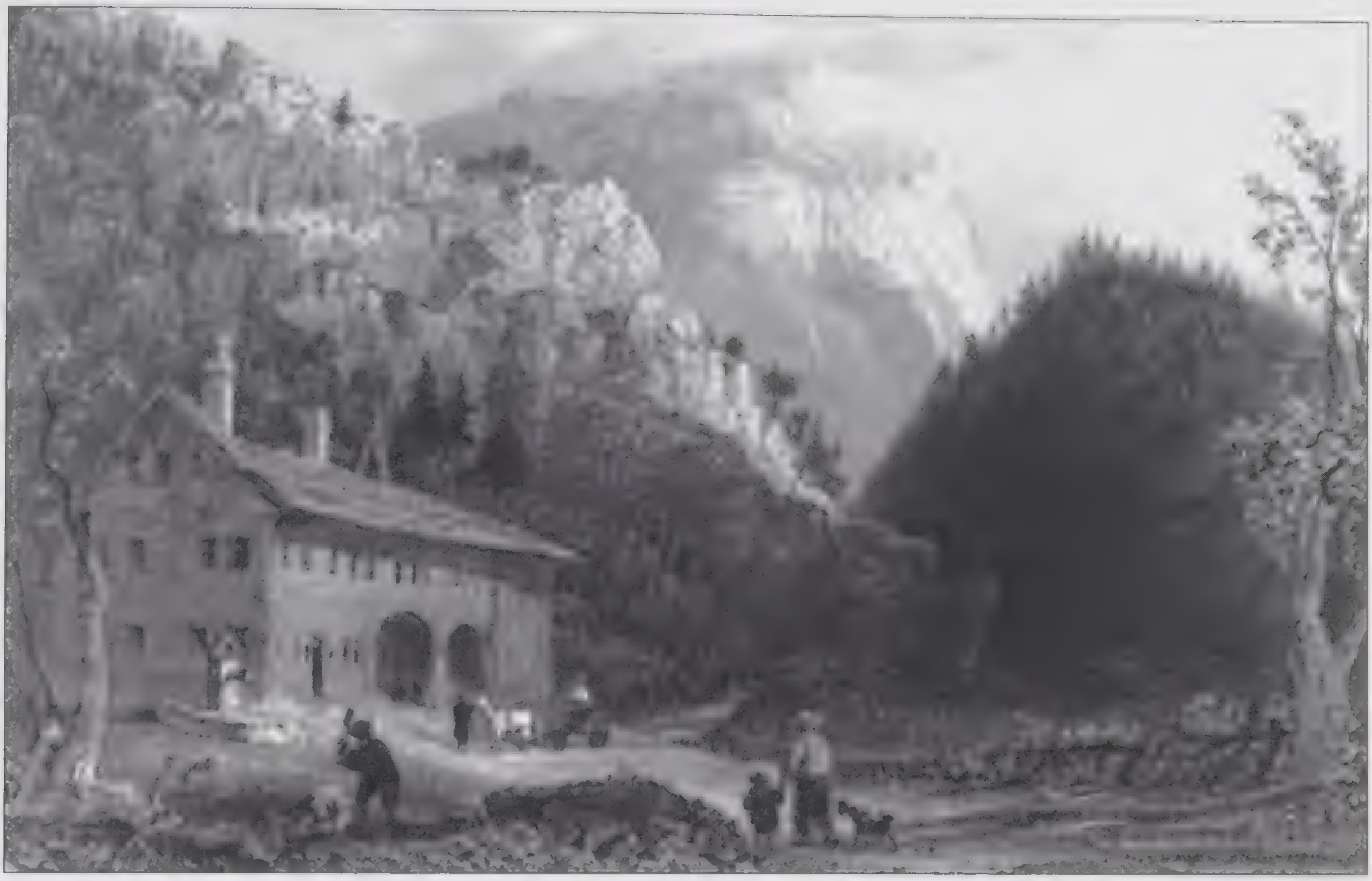
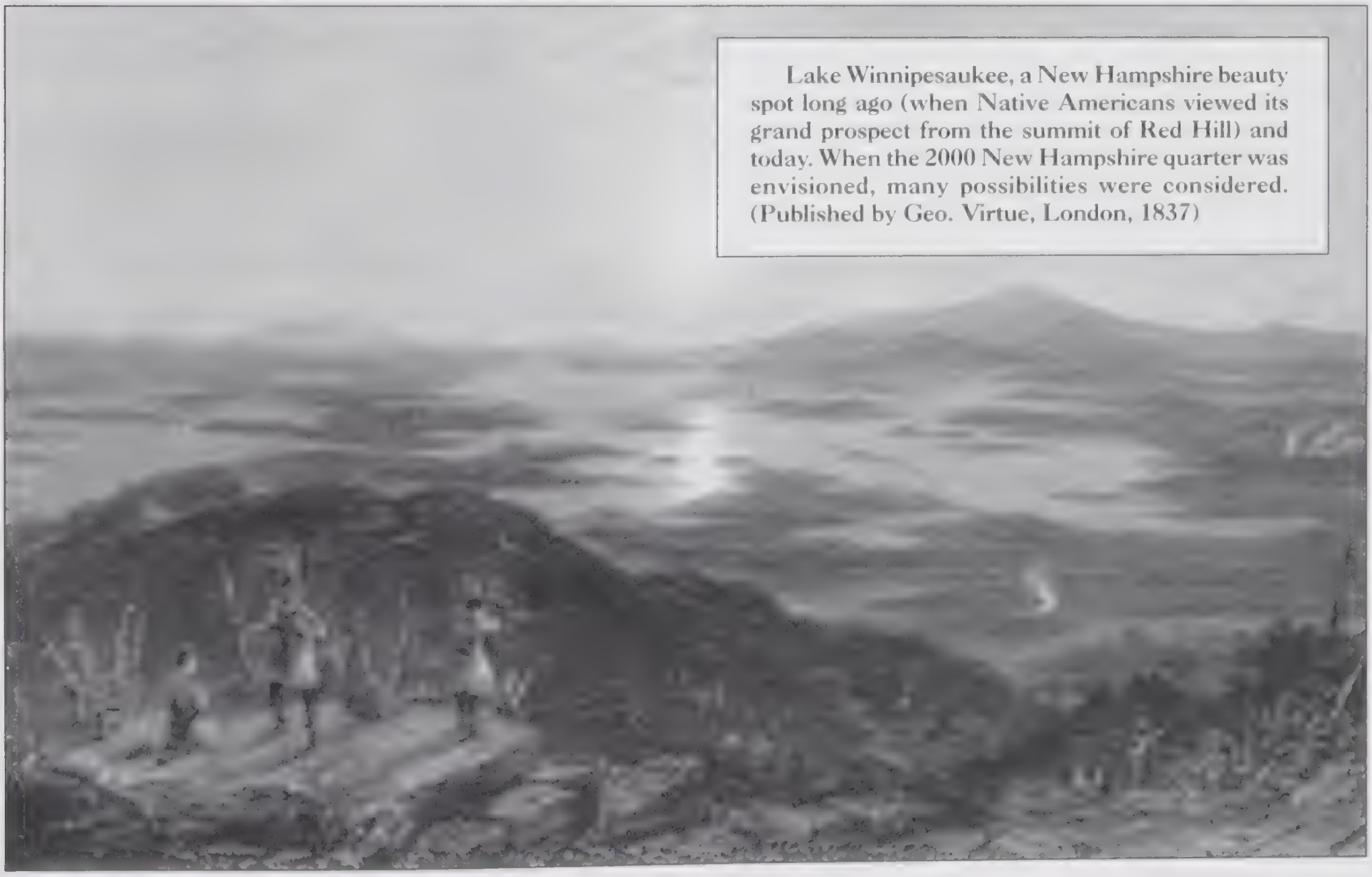

NEW HAMPSHIRE
1788
THE GRANITE STATE
OLD MAN OF THE MOUNTAIN
2000
E PLURIBUS UNUM


NEW HAMPSHIRE
1788
THE GRANITE STATE
2000
E PLURIBUS UNUM

Proposed motifs for the 2000 New Hampshire quarter design—a view of some of the diverse proposals. (Copies of original sketches provided by David Sundman, Littleton Coin Co.)



New Hampshire nostalgia: The Notch House, located not far from the Old Man of the Mountain, was a caravansary for travelers early in the nineteenth century. (Published by Geo. Virtue, London, 1839)



Lake Winnipesaukee, a New Hampshire beauty spot long ago (when Native Americans viewed its grand prospect from the summit of Red Hill) and today. When the 2000 New Hampshire quarter was envisioned, many possibilities were considered. (Published by Geo. Virtue, London, 1837)

These were sent to Philadelphia (where, at the Mint, engravers reside who translate the motifs into models and then into dies) and to Washington (where all decisions, or at least a lot of them, involving our great country are finalized).

These were checked and double checked, and some problems, or at least observations were discussed. The "meeting house" had four spires on its top corners, the style of an old Baptist church. What about the Methodists? The Catholics? The Jews? The agnostics? Anyway, just about any town in New Hampshire—or any other state—had an old church or two, or even an old non-churchlike meeting house. Thus, this design, while interesting, did not *uniquely typify* New Hampshire.

The author sitting on a table in the lobby of the NH Historical Society. In the background bagpipers are getting ready to pipe.

What about the bridge? Here in New Hampshire, we all like covered bridges, and on the unfortunate occasion when one collapses or burns down, chances are good that money will be raised and it will be rebuilt forthwith—such as the long covered bridge across the river near Cornish, New Hampshire, which in the early twentieth century, artist Saint-Gaudens used to cross to visit the post office (now and then there was a letter waiting from Teddy Roosevelt). However, when most of us think about covered bridges it is like thinking about buckets of maple syrup: There are a lot in New Hampshire, but *Vermont* is better known for such things.[1]

Turnabout

About this time, I was shown the two final sketches by Ken Bressett, who was on the U.S. Mint's Citizen Advisory Committee for the 50-State Quarter Program, and made this remark, "Why not show the Old Man of the Mountain? This is the New Hampshire symbol everyone knows?

The answer was something like this (coming from a New Hampshire native, now transplanted to Colorado, who was a member of the commemorative coin committee in Washington): "We considered this, but we felt it would not fit properly on a coin."

Forthwith, I sent off a brass token used in toll booths in New Hampshire (with a copy of the letter of transmittal sent to Dave Sundman, in case he thought it was not a good idea; besides, he lives in Littleton, which is just a stone's throw from this natural attraction). Shown on both sides of the token was, indeed, the Old Man. Ken Bressett did not recall having seen such a token before.[2]

"That looks great," he said. "Perhaps we can work up an Old Man of the Mountain" design after all."

And, this was done.... Precisely how, I do not know. But, the Old Man of the Mountain was used. In due course, 1,169,016,000 pieces were struck.

"What an ugly design," a reader of *Coin World* wrote in a letter to me after he had seen an illustration in a news article.

"What a great design!" said the governor of New Hampshire and *each and every other* New Hampshireite to whom I have spoken!

Georgia can have its peach, Connecticut can think of its old Charter Oak (which blew down in 1856), and, North Carolina can have the Wright Brothers' airplane (to which *Ohio* can also lay claim, for it was built there), but here in New Hampshire, we *love* our Old Man!

Ceremony Announced

In due course, it was announced that 10 a.m., Monday, August 7, 2000, would be the "launch date" of the

---

[1] Later, David Sundman advised the author that the New Hampshire Commemorative Committee had determined that one of covered bridge sketches submitted to the Committee was of the Day Bridge in Washington County, Pennsylvania, and another was a modified drawing of a bridge in Indiana.

[2] I later learned that David Sundman had sent Ken Bressett a similar token about the same time (correspondence, May 21, 2001). Sundman had also discussed the designs with Bressett in a conversation held in Orlando, January 7, 1999.

New Hampshire quarter. Designs were sent to the news media and, meanwhile, a lot of the things were being struck. However, they were not to be "official" until August 7.

Through the kind offices of incoming Mint Director Jay Johnson, I was sent an invitation to the ceremony, and was requested to ask for staffer Martha Watson when I showed up. The ceremony was to be held on the front steps of the New Hampshire State House (we do not call it the *Capitol*), a building that has been in continuous use since 1819—home to the third largest legislative body in the world (with several hundred representatives and a dozen or so senators—exceeded in total number only by the United States Congress and the British House of Parliament).

The State House is a "down home" sort of place. Groups of schoolchildren regularly troupe in and out of the place, as do tourists and others. If the governor is in, chances are good that a warm "Hello" will be given to everyone. (Try that in New York or California!)

Getting Ready for the Ceremony

I arrived a half hour early, at 9:30 a.m. The most amazing part of this entire narrative is that, right away, I found a parking space right across the street from the State House. Upon depositing two quarters (one Massachusetts, the other Georgia) I was entitled to stay there for two hours.

Under gray skies with a touch of mist in the air, I walked the short distance to the State House steps—but no one was there. Surely, with the ceremony just a half-hour away, there would be a podium, flag, picture of the quarter dollar, or *something* already set up. But, that was not the case.

I walked into the State House and inquired at the reception desk.

"Because it might rain, the reception was moved over to the Historical Society."

The New Hampshire Historical Society is located across the street from the State House, and about three

NEW HAMPSHIRE
1788
LIVE FREE OR DIE
OLD MAN OF THE MOUNTAIN
2000
E PLURIBUS UNUM

The ceremony in progress. David Pickens of the United States Mint presents the original sketch for the New Hampshire quarter dollar to Governor Jeanne Shaheen. (Photograph courtesy of David Sundman, Littleton Coin Co.)

times closer to my car than were the front steps where the ceremony was to be, but wasn't.

I walked into the Society, a familiar place to me and my staff, for in 1998 and 1999 we spent a lot of time there doing research concerning Edmund Roberts, the emissary fellow who in the 1830s arranged treaties between the United States and the Sultan of Muscat and, separately, the King of Siam.

On hand in casual dress was Bill Copeley, director of the Society, who had come in after two weeks' vacation to see what was new at his office. The Society is normally closed on Monday, and Bill had every right to expect that he would have peace and quiet.

But, he did not. The place was swarming with numismatists, politicians, Mint officials, media people, school kids, curiosity seekers, and even a corps of bagpipers in kilts plus a drummer. The main part of Society's library, where Bill had hoped (presumably) to check his mail and messages, was now the staging area for the dignitaries in attendance.

I said "Hi" to Mary Ellen Withrow, the treasurer of the United States, who, it is said (or the *Guinness Book of World Records* says) has had her signature reproduced (on currency) more than anyone else in the history of the world (even Kilroy). I thought it would be a nice idea to have my picture taken with her, so I did (the last time I did this, we were both attending a reception held by the American Numismatic Society in New York, at the Explorers' Club, I believe).

I also said "Hi" to one of our Washington representatives, John Sununu, and asked him if he remembered the time a few years earlier when I with my automatically-played (by paper rolls) calliope headed his "Sununu for Congress" contingent in a parade (not to be confused with the July 4, 1999 parade, when the same calliope and its owner paraded through New Hampshire in the first gala parade staged by George W. Bush). But, I digress....

And, I said "Hi" to some others as well, including Robert ("Bart") Bartanowicz, president of the Nashua (New Hampshire) Coin Club, and Don Pickering, director of the club. Both gentlemen were as friendly as could be, and we spent perhaps 10 minutes discussing the club. Bart offered to hold my briefcase (thanks, Bart!) while I scooted around checking on this and that.

Maynard Sundman, founder of Littleton Coin Co., was there, and headed directly to the special VIP seat in the audience that son Dave had arranged for him. Maynard is a very nice guy—better known in stamps than in coins—the proud father of three sons, each of whom have made a mark in the coin or stamp field. Maynard likes old periodicals, and every once in a while, when looking through *stamp* magazines from decades ago, he will clip and mail to me something about *coin* history. (Thanks, Maynard!)

Final Preparations

Perhaps 10 to 15 minutes after 10 o'clock, after a flourish by the bagpipers (whose music *really* echoed in the cut-stone foyer of the Historical Society), the dignitaries were seated on the stage of an assembly room across the foyer from the library. Perhaps 200 people were on hand, enough to fairly pack the room.

The Mint's media people—not Mint personnel, but representatives hired on a contractual basis—gave me a press kit. I asked if I could have some prints, later, of the ceremony, to send to *Coin World*, as I was covering the event for that newspaper, but was told: "We are not taking any still pictures."

So, I took some myself with a nifty little Casio digital camera that I had been carrying around for a few months.

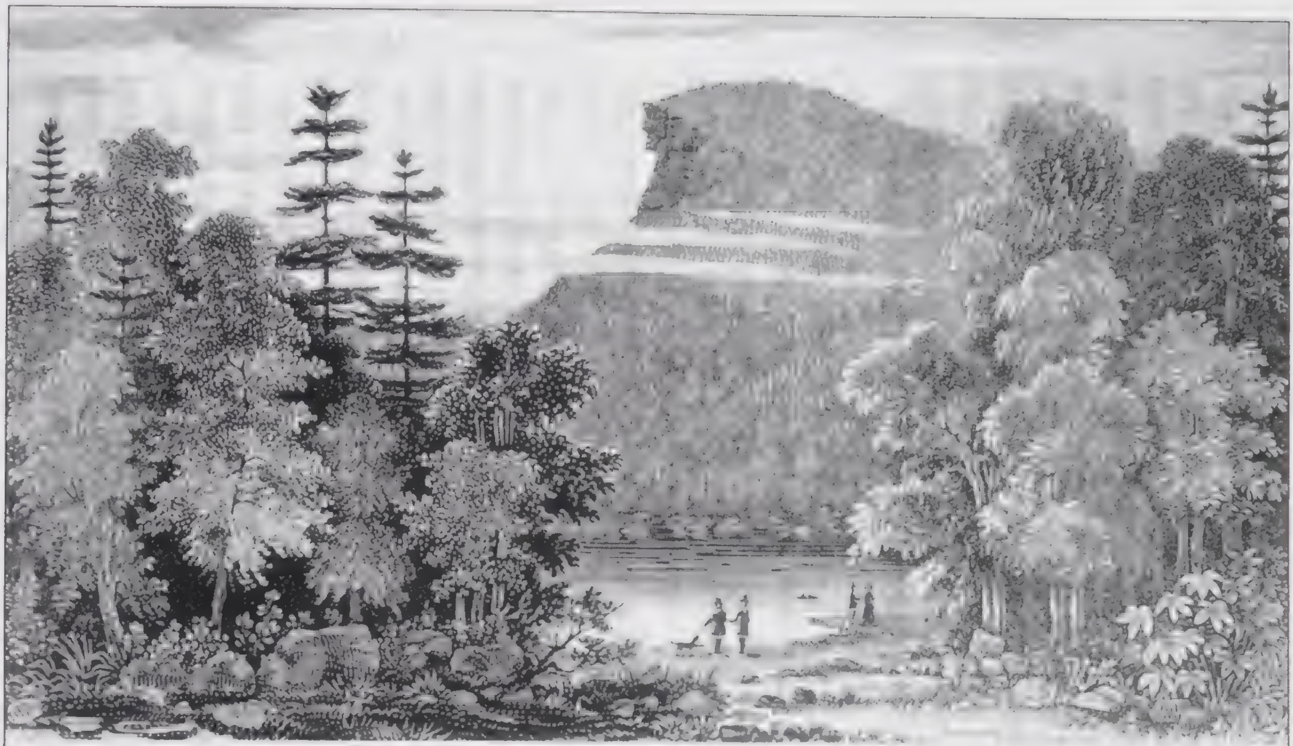
The ceremony started by the showing of the United States and New Hampshire flags. U.S. Treasurer Mary Ellen Withrow was the first to stand and place her hand across her chest, after which most of the other dignitaries did also. (Bagpipe music here.)

The Ceremony

As might be expected from the Granite State, the ceremony held in New Hampshire was a bit different from mainstream America. Or, at least I think it must have been different.

The master of ceremonies was Gerry Williams, billed on the program as "New Hampshire's First Artist Laureate." With long hair, sort of, and with an "artistic appearance" (not easily defined), he looked the part. Williams opened with some well-considered remarks concerning the importance of this occasion as the latest addition to the rich heritage of New Hampshire. He also introduced the politicos, including Governor Shaheen, United States Treasurer Withrow, Congressman Charles F. Bass, Congressman Sununu (already mentioned), and others.

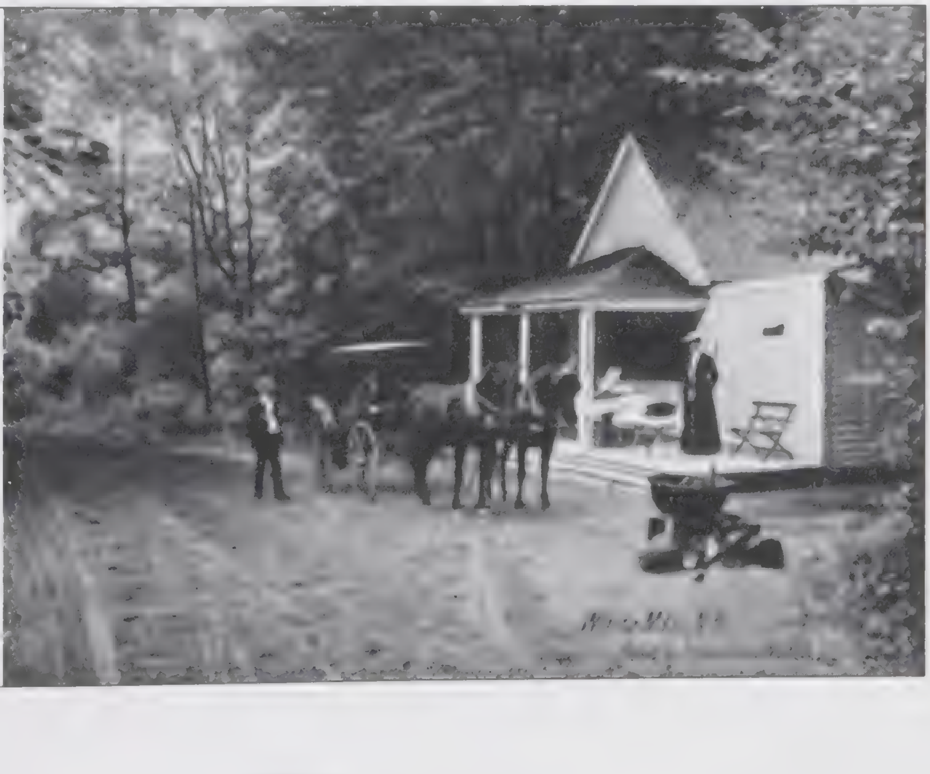
Next to the podium, with an old oil portrait of Daniel Webster against the wall behind, came Marie Harris, the poet laureate of New Hampshire (do all states have poet laureates and artist laureates? By the way, New Hampshire even has its own state *amphibian*). She had written a poem about *our* quarter! Now, do other state



"The Old Man of the Mountain," the rocky profile shown in the distance in this nineteenth century print. The accompanying text noted:

"The Old Man of the Mountain has been declared to be the greatest natural curiosity in the state. On a bold and nearly perpendicular part of the rock which terminates one of the projecting cliffs of Mount Jackson, at the height of 1,000 feet, in bold relief against the western sky, and surveying in calm majesty the wild and varied region stretching toward the south, is seen this wonderful profile of the human face, delineated with striking proportions, wearing from age to age the same undisturbed expression of sovereign dignity and hoary wisdom.

"The profile is produced by a peculiar combination of the surfaces and angles of five huge granite blocks. As the traveler reaches the point of observation from the highway he is directed to look in a northwardly direction, when he discovers in the distance the stern visage of the Old Man of the Mountain." (*New Hampshire As It Is*, Edwin A. Charlton, 1855)



On the way to visit the Old Man of the Mountain, 1905 style, stopping to refresh people and horses. (Chisholm Brothers, Portland, Maine, color postcard) quarters have their own poems? I would guess not! The composition, in free-style, was titled "Common Coin."

By the way, in the several discourses from the podium, the words *numismatist* and *numismatic* were in every case pronounced correctly! (Has this been true of previous ceremonies for other state quarters held elsewhere? I don't know—or care.)

In due course, the audience was treated to remarks by David Pickens, associate director of the Mint. Pickens, who I had not met before, stated that, among other things, he was a numismatist himself and enjoyed coins and coin collecting. Score 10 points for our hobby (in addition to the 10 points already racked up by Treasurer Withrow, who for a long time has been a friend to numismatics).

In due course, Treasurer Mary Ellen Withrow presented the "first" year 2000 New Hampshire quarter dollar to Governor Shaheen, who by that time had addressed the audience with some nice comments about the coin program. Governor Shaheen was also given the original large sketch of the Old Man of the Mountain from which the coin had been created.

An announcement was made that all kids in the audience would soon receive a free quarter as a souvenir. About this time I left the ceremony and hurried off to the airport for a flight to the ANA Convention, held that year in Philadelphia.

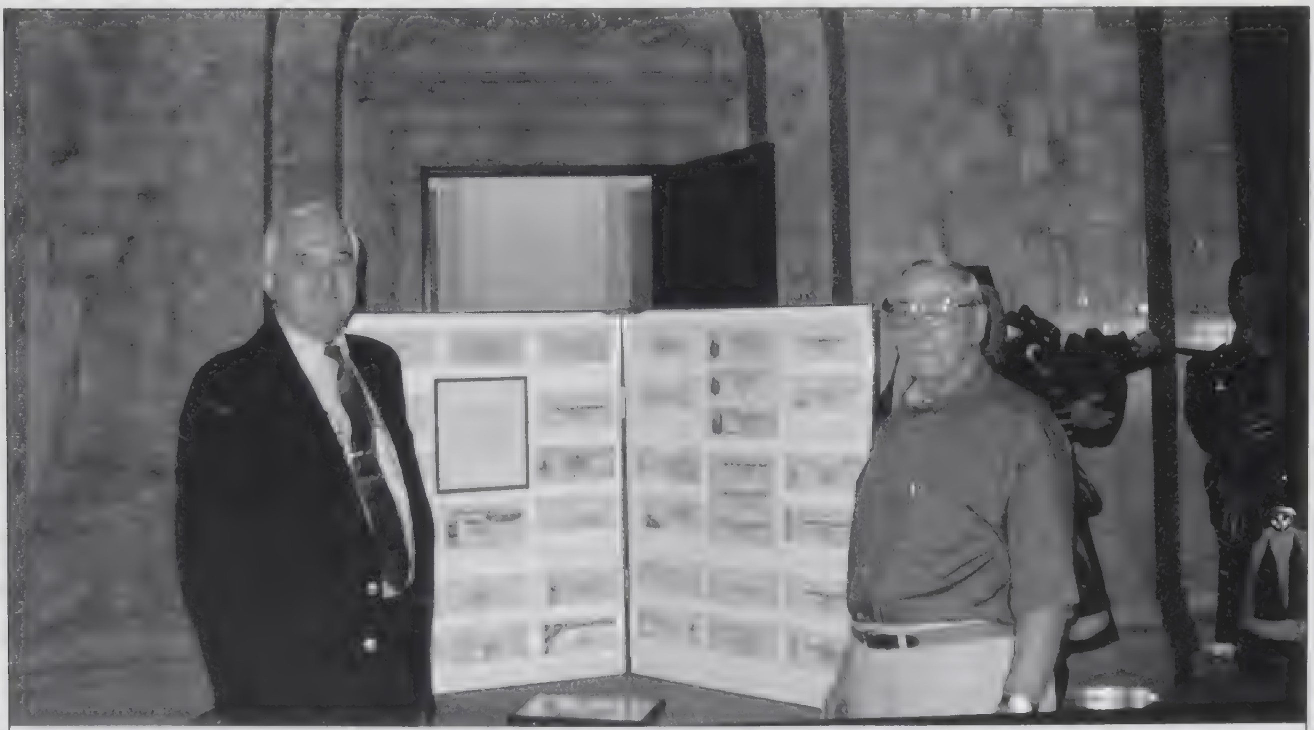
David Pickens

Earlier in the morning I had rushed about—stopping at the office to check things, coordinating with various Bowers and Merena staffers who were entering bid sheets for our ANA Millennium Sale, or were packing magnifying glasses, etc., for the coin bourse, or were doing other things, I did not stop for coffee or anything else. At the airport, I went to the restaurant to join other staffers and to have lunch. Not long afterward, I ran into David Pickens, who, it turned out, was taking the same flight to Philadelphia and who, it again turned out, was to sit next to me.

In government circles, some say they are numismatists but are not. Dave said he was one, and he is one. We talked.

Born in 1946, he began collecting coins as a young kid in 1952 (which is the same year I started, but I was eight years older than he). He recalls that in 1953 his dad took him to Gimbel's Coin Department (operated by the late Robert and Jack Friedberg, whose Capitol Coin Co. and Coin and Currency Institute had about three dozen leased departments in large stores around the country) and bought a current Proof set for him.

At the time, young numismatist Pickens lived in Forest Hills, Long Island, not far from New York City. He would ride his bicycle a few miles to the Hollander Coin Shop and "look through a large bucket of Indian



"Bart" Bartanowicz (left) and Don Pickering, of the Nashua Coin Club, were on hand to meet and greet numismatists. They brought along a nice display (shown here) of New Hampshire paper items related to banking.

pennies" to find interesting dates. Hollander was also a leading distributor of coin holders and other supplies.

A career government official, David Pickens has worked with the Treasury Department for most of his adult life. For about 18 months, beginning in 1989, he worked with the Bureau of the Mint, then in 1994 came back—and stayed.

"What are your favorite coin designs?" I asked.

"I really like the Saint-Gaudens high relief twenty. I also like the Liberty Standing half dollar, and I think that Laura Fraser's head of Washington that we used last year on a commemorative is beautiful."

I reflected silently that calling a half dollar of the 1916-1947 style a "Liberty Standing" coin is what a lot of old timers still do. In the 1950s, everyone called them that. Today, it is proper numismatic etiquette to call them *Liberty Walking*, although if you take a peek at the 1916 *Annual Report of the Director of the Mint* you will see that, officially, Miss Liberty was *striding*.

David Pickens commented that he found it unfortunate in the present day of telephone, e-mail, and other paperless communications, there is but a skimpy record of many areas of the state quarter program.

Well, for at least the New Hampshire program, the preceding remarks may fill in a few spaces. It was nice to have been there.

Mary Ellen Withrow, treasurer of the United States, was on hand at the New Hampshire quarter dollar ceremony. For years she has been a prominent figure at numismatic events — much to the delight of collectors.

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